

THE POETRY OF EATING

EDWARD S. WILSON



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THE POETRY OF EATING

BEING A COLLECTION OF OCCASIONAL
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BY

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OF EDUCATION, THE POLITICAL DEVEL-
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PREFACE.

THIS little book is made up of brief editorials that have appeared in the columns of the Ohio State Journal, from time to time, during the past two or three years. They were written, in the first place, to give diversion and variety to a usually somber editorial page, though I must confess to a conceit, that they might add a little sentiment to the common experience of eating. I discovered soon that the articles were agreeable to the readers; that they exalted one of the common joys of life, and brightened the table with little touches of fancy not observed before. One gets close to Nature when he is eating, feels her love and kindness, and recognizes her grace and beauty;

that is, if he opens his eyes and heart wide enough to look beyond the commonplace of the material, out into the fields where she dwells serenely. The mission of this little book is to unfold this vision, as widely as may be, and at the same time, impress whoever prepares the viands, with the spirit that broods everywhere over her beautiful works.

ART OF COOKING.

IT is an established fact that everybody likes good eating. It is promotive of joy and health. There is an immense amount of human happiness dancing around it. And yet, don't you know, there is a deal of indifference to this gladsome excellence? There is decidedly more interest in a new stitch in embroidery, or the cut of a sleeve, or the ribbon on a hat, than how a beefsteak is broiled, or a custard is made, or a potato is baked.

And yet, in the latter business, there is more need for taste, and knowledge, and scientific requirement; more room for the exercise of that love of humanity, which is happily so fashionable; more chance for self-development, not only in skill and judgment, but in

those qualities of the heart that incline to make others happy.

It ought to be considered as one of the heights of art, and will be some day, when mankind is higher up, that the ability to take an egg, a little sugar, some milk, and a piece of butter, or other such simple things, and so blend them together, with a keen sense of taste and a recognition of the laws of harmony, and the sway of a sweet and loving disposition, dressed in white aprons and sunny smiles, will reach the plane of sculpture and painting and stand alongside of the Milo Venus and "The Sowers" in the admiration of a world of culture.

Of course, we shall have to wait. We are waiting; yet looking ahead to the time when it will be a part of our education to regard cooking as something that involves scientific

knowledge, poetic fancy and the salvation of mankind.

* * *

A CUP OF COFFEE.

EVERYTHING in this world has poetry back of it — even stepping into a mud puddle, eating a piece of bologna, or forgetting the night key and returning when all are asleep. In fact, the only thing worth talking about is the poetry of it. That is the divine aroma that stuck to the thing when it was sent out of heaven.

“What can you make out of a cup of coffee?” asked a friend. Well, the man who empties a cup of coffee into his stomach, and smacks his lips over it — only that and no more — doesn’t rise to the grandeur of his experience; he is happy over a little animal satis-

faction, and that is all there is for him. See yonder, on that tropical hill-side, a field of coffee bloom, as white as a snowfall. The sunbeams are struggling to break through the guava branches to get into the heart of the blossoms and make their homes there. Out of the white scene comes a fragrance that fills the soft air. The birds are flitting about, singing their songs which go down into the flowers and stay. The butterflies go a-wooing over the bloom, and their spirit-like dalliance touches the petals with a joy.

There is where the cup of coffee was born, and if one only had a grateful spirit and realized the inward goodness of things, when he emerged from his drowsy bedroom, fatigued by abstinence and weary of sleep, with destiny and the day blinking unsteadily in his face, and he sat down to his coffee, he would see where the thrill comes from, that glides into his blood

and sings along his nerves. He would see that what he is drinking was the white bloom of tropical fields, the purple shadows of the guava, the songs of the birds, the love making of the butterflies, and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. That is, he would see all these things if he had any poetry in his soul, the only charm that lifts life above hoggish content.

We must not regard lovely things as of Topsy-like origin — but look upon them as blent with conditions that were lovely before, and there is no object that evolves the thought better than a cup of coffee and its heavenly origin.

BREAD AND BUTTER.

IN a lecture before the Harvard Medical school the other day, Dr. Rice said a slice of bread and butter was as rich in nutriment as 16 oysters or one-half a glass of milk. In fact, he put bread and butter up in the front of wholesome, health-giving foods. If he had only modified his remark by saying there are several kinds of bread and butter, and of course he meant the best, his declaration would have been of great practical value.

A piece of good bread and butter — what a tonic! what a joy! Every man is entitled to that much, and there should not be another ostrich feather, or automobile or box at the theater bought, until that much is assured. There is so much bad bread and butter made that some people don't believe there is any good, and they

make up for the deficiency by eating meat and soups and pies.

Now, a woman who can engineer into the presence of a man of good, healthy appetite, a nice piece of bread and butter, in which her charm, her grace, her intellect, are in some mysterious way commingled, is an angel, and if she can't, the good Lord have pity on her. Mind, we said "good, healthy appetite" — that's the condition; something normal, like the flowers by the roadside or the crows sailing in the air. Of course, if a man has butchered his stomach with midnight lobster, or infinite sausage or "angel food," bread and butter seems as tame as the golden rule, and he craves something more violent and complex that will reduce the simple melody of his taste to a rapturous discord.

As a rule, a family that has good bread and butter is a happy family, for the queen of that household is in

harmony with the stars and the brooks
that sing down the valley.

* * *

CONSOMME OR PUREE.

VERY often, when a person sits down to a dinner, he is confronted by the alternative — consomme or puree. The former is a clear liquid supposed to represent the strength of some meat, and the latter is the infusion into a cream of the virtue of some vegetable. The former is really the dinner soup and the latter a lunch affair, and when a person makes his choice upon these considerations, he leaves out the question of merit altogether.

But what we want to select out of all the category of soups, consomme or puree, is that form of the latter known as tomato bisque, and boost it

finest token of earth's richness and prodigality anywhere seen. Catch onto that. Flaunt your fancy about in the limitless ocean of sunshine and showers, of which the roasting ear is only a wisp of the creamy spray.

This thing of tackling a roasting ear, like a stolid mule, for the corn itself, lowers it to the level of picking up chips, or running an errand; that is just satisfying an appetite, and one might as well eat fried onions with a caseknife. That kills hunger. It silences craving. But eating green corn has a higher mission than that. It puts one as close to nature as lying in a bed of lilies. One cannot taste the sunshine anywhere, as when he seizes a juicy ear of corn in his eager fists, and goes at it with an open countenance and a happy smile, ripping off the rows of sweetened dews and dawns, till his mouth and soul reek with delight.

Eat it on the cob; the whole cob, the longer the better. Take it as Nature gives it to you — in its naked beauty, in its jewelled loveliness, in its juicy richness. Don't peck at it as a black-bird does a sunflower, but revel in it, luxuriate in it, bite off all the tints of the morn, the soft gales of the afternoon, the glow of the starlight, the hymn of the sparrow, the laughing dewdrops, the smile of the rainbow — they are all there for the alert soul that has a fancy above food. He who does not see them, nor feel them, is not worthy of a roasting ear.

But the main thing is the recklessness in eating it, the joyous abandon in cleaving off the pearly richness, the getting down into the glory of the act, mindless of napkin, finger bowls or who is looking. A dilettante cannot any more eat corn on a cob than he can skin a cat. He measures his acts by a stifling propriety, and not by the

broad flight of the soul. Dear reader, join the soul, and eat corn as a sparrow flies to heaven, with a song in your mouth.

* * *

CHERRY PIE.

ALL spring the little cherry tree in the backyard has been struggling through snow and frost and dismal rains and winds trying to work itself up to the lofty realization of a cherry pie. We have watched it with keen solicitude as it threw out a green bud now and a white blossom then, only to have some icy blast come along to tear the heart out of its fair endeavor. And so this mild June morning, there it is, with a few crimson jewels on it, and a robin on the grape arbor nearby, looking on and asking itself: "Wonder if they are ripe enough yet?"

The dream is gone. Between the chilly winds and that watchful robin, all the bright anticipations of cherry pie have taken flight, and one must relapse into reminiscence and feed his thoughts on the delights that once were. As the writer stood on the pier in Porto Rico, bidding goodby to friends, as the ship was ready to sail northward, one dear man, with a grip tighter than the rest and a deeper meaning in his eyes, uttered as his last farewell greeting: "Eat a piece of cherry pie for me."

It was a noble request. It showed his heart was up in the van of good things — that somewhere the sunlight of his life and the rosy exudation of that pie melted into the same glow of youth. And it is so; there is nothing in the world that suggests the crimson dawn, and the happy birds, and the mellow breezes as the cherry pie. Why, one can taste them as plainly

as one can taste the sweet earth in a radish or a dew drop in a grape. There are few things that possess a flavor that seems to come up from beyond the bounds of terrestrial experience; something that suggests there is a better world than this, somewhere; somewhat that excites the latent longing of the soul. Cherry pie is one of them. Always cut it in quarters.

SOUTHDOWN MUTTON.

SOME gentlemen were talking about the kind of meat they like. Two of them said rare roast beef suited them best; another said roast duck was his special delight; and another suggested roast goose; while a fifth, with an abandon that seemed to jeer at the choices of the others, declared that ham and eggs was his idea of perfection, which declaration evoked a congratulatory "ah" from the others.

A gentleman on the side asked permission to say that a young South-down mutton roast was the finest meat ever crossed by a carving knife. That judgment is hereby approved. It is a meat that is commended by the very goodness and innocence of the animal itself. It is more related to the herbs and the grass and the dewdrops and seems to partake more of their nature

than any other meat. One tastes their mildness and serenity in every bite of the tenderloin one puts in his mouth. Look at the Southdown on the hillside, nipping the jewelled herbs—how tranquil, how tender, how sinless. It seems as if the Creator had taken a loving interest in providing this meat.

One never disputes with his mutton; “let us return to it,” says Charles Lamb and nobody has ever refused. It is the meat of literature — the kind that keeps up its conscience. It is also the meat of science. “When you ate your mutton at dinner,” said Huxley, on illustrating some interesting process in biology — showing that in the service of high truth, mutton, and quite sure over in England, the Southdown, was first thought of. When at a Whitehouse dinner, President Grant received his plate of Southdown, he remarked to the English ambassador, who sat at his right, that no other

meat equaled it, and Diplomacy smiled a sincere approval.

The flesh that one eats often contains the quirks and tempers of the animal. We believe we have seen a book that tells the effect of the meat of various animals upon the human spirit. One gets spiteful, remorseful, pugnacious, or stupid, according to the kind of meat he eats. But when it comes to a roast of Southdown mutton, one's emotions subside into tranquility and he takes his neighbor by the hand and walks with him through the blue-skied afternoons.

A STALK OF CELERY.

A BUNCH of sunbeams, riding on a soft breeze drops to earth, mingles with the dewdrops and comes up a stalk of celery, the most spiritual of all the herbs that grow. No wonder people find contentment in its crisp and crystalline texture. It is a diet for serene souls; for those who look far out into the horizons and contemplate and build fancies out of fond desires.

Whoever munches celery must do it with a mild mind. If one eats the delicious herb when his heart is full of hate, and he is fretful and mad at the world, he misses that immaculate twang that is pressed out of the sunlit dewdrop. That is why celery is such a fine herb for company, when glints of happy humor and tender friendship play about. A man doesn't go off by himself and eat celery, as

he would a sandwich or a piece of bologna.

Celery used to grow out in the swamps among the lizards and the bullfrogs, but even then its lovely mission in the world was recognized, for the canvasback duck got all its delicacy and unction from the juicy fibre of its green stalks. Since then, it has been civilized; and the gentle mixture of sunbeams, zephyrs and glint of dewdrop has been preserved and kept inviolate by a process of blanching. Can't you taste it when you take up a white, crisp, crystalline stalk and bite it in a way that it rings out like a cheer and a hurrah?

A lady said one time, she liked to eat celery, for it seemed that everything gross had been extracted from it in some way, and she was actually eating purity itself. Well, it does seem that way — its whiteness; its snowflaky innocence; its sparkling translu-

cence; its tang and savor that bespeaks the sweetness of earth and sky. Really, it seems like purity, whose other side is gentility, which the noble herb inspires in him who loves it truly.

* * *

SPRING LAMB AND PEAS.

NOW, take pork and beans, or boiled beef and cabbage — good, both of them, indispensable, strongly appetizing, and yet there is a suggestion about them of a cold wind out of a dark cloud, of a sort of solace when nature comes up and chides one of languor, and banters one to get a move on himself. They are the food of exertion, of endeavor and the tumult of life.

But spring lamb and peas are not so. There is something so tranquilizing about them. They suggest the soft

and gentle side of life, like the morning sun peeping over into a brook or a zephyr sighing across a bed of tulips. They constitute the first sign of spring fever, for as soon as man rises from a dinner of lamb and peas, he goes about putting up the hammock, so he can get out among the birds, the blossoms, the butterflies, where the sunbeams nestle and the soft winds play.

When the poet spoke of "ethereal mildness," he meant spring lamb and peas. How well he knew them! Lamb, the type of innocence, and the pea, the first fruit of civilization, away back on the Aryan summits. The pea grows nowhere in a wild state. It is the product of tender care and the heart's solicitude, and hence fitted for gentle association, and all the quiet moods of nature, where no anger, trouble, or tumult comes.

When a sharp wind arises or frost hurls a menace from a clear night,

spring lamb and peas vanish, like a bird that feels a prying breath upon its nest. But when the shadows shorten, and the robin is abroad in the early morning, and the apple blossoms are whitening the air, then appear the lamb and peas, with a smiling salutation, "Here we are — gather about us." Don't we? Don't we taste the ethereal mildness? Don't we feast our imagination on the blue sky and the daffodils?

A DISH OF PRUNES.

THERE is a bad prospect for fruit, they say, and next winter we will have to rely mainly upon the prune. Well, what's the matter with the prune? Not a thing. Some people affect to throw up their noses at prunes, but they do this at everything.

But there is no use bothering with such people. A man with a big heart likes prunes. His views are not narrowed to the space of a strawberry box, but they romp around the horizons like an angel on a vacation. They behold in a prune the luxury of life, that one cannot find everywhere. Of course, we do not mean those runty, scrawny prunes, that the worms have pulled off the trees, and people have dried them against the days of starvation.

Not that kind; but the plump plum

that the blue skies and the soft haze of tropical twilights have honored with a mantle of purple; the fat kind, that gushes out in streams of sweetness when it is put into the mouth; the sort where nature seems to press distended plenty upon one, until one wonders where it all comes from.

There have been hard, ill-cooked, ill-dried prunes that people have tried to like, but couldn't; and there have been big purple spheres of richness, that have changed the expectant countenance into smiles as bright as the sun-up. We can get along with these next winter, and can look back on these recreant strawberry times as we look back on a panic — glad that they are past and gone.

Let the procession of fruits and berries pass on and out of sight, but there be one of them we want to drop out and stay with us, through the snows and boreal blasts. It is the gor-

geous and exuberant prune, the child of the sun, bringing a paternal blessing with it. Another dish of the blessing? Yes, please.

* * *

APPLE DUMPLINGS.

WHEN you have apple dumplings for dinner, let them suffice. There is something in the name of apple dumplings that rumbles through the halls of satisfaction. They appease the appetite as a July shower slakes the thirst of the cornfield; they do it so gently, so kindly as not to leave a regret behind.

Bring forth the dish piled high with the rotund goodness. Ceres and Pomona smile from every shining sphere and welcome you to the feast. And what have we here? Fields of golden wheat waving in the noonday sun;

rosy orchards smiling in the morning light; soft, green pastures drinking in the pink sunsets — all these taken up by dainty hands and fashioned into white orbs that you can sink your fork into and bring it to your palate and have it all to yourself — why, if such a benefaction could come to one only as a special providence, the heavens would be crowded with invocation.

But they are for everybody — as good in the palace as in the hut — as grateful to all as the morning sun in winter, or a breeze on a summer afternoon. It is nature lolling in the lap of art. See that Spitzenberg blinking at you, tantalizing you from behind his snowy robe! Go for him, stab him with your fork, tear off his robe, drown him in cream, inundate him, exterminate him, and let him live hereafter only as tender memory.

We dare not invade the sacred pre-

cinets of the culinary art, and tell in what direction taste and fancy should go. What song the heart shall sing as it peels the apples, or what grace the white hands shall say as they mould the dough, is not for limping invention like ours — all that we can do, all our muse can sing, is the glory of the apple dumpling. Here is the trinity of grass, of grain, of fruit, the maker of gentle minds, of modest loves, of strong and earnest lives. All apple dumplings should be made just large enough for a person to have two.

DOUGHNUTS.

G OVERNOR BELL of Vermont, tells of a letter he received from a lady recently, asking him what his favorite dainty dish was. He answered her: "Bread and milk, coffee and doughnuts." Speaking of the matter to a friend, he said: "I should have added pie, shouldn't I?"

The fact that he failed to mention pie was a great compliment to the doughnut, which was really merited, for a well made doughnut, accompanying a cup of coffee, belongs to the category of exalted foods. They go together. Either is the complement of the other. Of course, one can drink a cup of coffee with any old thing, but you cannot eat a doughnut with anything else. There was never anything conjured up by human need or fancy that reached up to the glory of

a cup of coffee as a doughnut does. It is one of the anti-clinals of the appetite.

Some people don't care for doughnuts. That is because they are not acquainted with the right kind. Some women can no more make a doughnut than they can fashion a horseshoe. They make a hole through a piece of dough and throw it in a skillet of warm fat and let the grease sizzle into it, drag it out, and palm it off for a doughnut. It is on a level with fried fitch.

There is as much art in making a doughnut as in playing a sonata or painting a sunset. It is a symphony of snowy flour, fresh butter, white sugar, new laid eggs, a pinch of soda, all fondled together lovingly by the dainty hands of a happy hearted woman, then moulded into circlets of creamy dough and thrown into a pot of lard as hot as the depths of

Acheron, where they simmer and sing till they are brown as a hazel nut. Take one out, sprinkle it with sugar, break it open and the inside is as dry as a popcorn; no grease, no stale smell, and the texture is as delicate as a pound cake. That's a doughnut. That's the kind Governor Bell meant. That's the sort all governors, poets, editors and the chosen of earth take with their coffee, when the sun breaks on a cold and cheerless world and the winter day begins.

BUTTERMILK.

WE may not classify buttermilk among the luxuries, though some think it belongs there, but that it is a rare and substantial food, there is no question. We care not to burden the subject with science for the poetry of eating is our kindly theme; but there is a certain romance in the scientific aspects of buttermilk that might prove pleasing as well as profitable.

Buttermilk is mainly proteid and fat, which is strictly a food combination, the same as milk, in which lactic acid is generated to promote the buttermilk stage. Now this lactic acid is a nest of microbes, and it is the particular business of microbes to fight other microbes. They are the most pugnacious elements of the almost endless animal existence.

Now it happens that in the laby-

rinthine depths of the digestive system, there are colonies of other microbes, a most disreputable class of scoundrels, that roam about seeking fusses, like a lot of drunken loafers on a village street. These microbes are very destructive of human joy. When they get on a spree, which is often, the poor human whom they inhabit, sighs in the throes of headache, lassitude and general good-for-nothingness.

Happily the lactic microbe is anxious to get at these riotous fellows and when he does, he brings joy and quiet to the village street. He takes these impudent vandals — kicks and chokes and strangles them to death. That is his mission. He is a beneficent microbe. His life is devoted to the suppression of misery and sorrow. His home is in the buttermilk, among the proteids and fats, the rich legacies of

the merciful soil and the sunshiny fields of clover.

Here we must leave the poetry and get awfully practical. The buttermilk that comes from the churn has lost about all its fats, and thus far is a deficient food; and here science comes with its benediction, in the form of a little preparation as pure as a dew-drop, which dropped into a crock of sweet milk turns it in 24 hours to the prettiest, jolliest, most health-giving, and fat-preserving buttermilk that ever smiled upon this world of woe. Have a glass.

STEWED CHICKEN.

THERE is a never-failing criterion by which a person may judge whether a man is growing old or not. Recollections, bald heads, gray hairs, canes, careful steps, bi-focal glasses, and even wrinkles, are doubtful signs of growing years; but when a man sits at a table, on which there is a platter of stewed chicken, a big bowl of creamy gravy sprinkled with bits of parsley, and a plate piled high with warm biscuit, and that man goes at them with both hands, smiles more than he talks, helps himself twice or thrice, and does not know when to stop — that man is a boy again, a young chap of 17, full of the glow of life and the promise of happy days to come.

If he had turned up his nose at that chicken gravy and biscuit, and stuck

his fork into a piece of boiled beef and called for light bread and smeared mustard on his plate, the sorrows and burdens of 70 years would have rested on him; but seizing the gravy bowl instead, and dipping out spoonfuls till the bottom of his plate is covered deep, and then sopping (watch that act) great chunks of snowy biscuit in the redolent fluid, and playing with his open countenance with unalloyed delight, until the plate is clean, one can read in his heart as he eats on and on the bright dreams of youth, the mumbly peg, the fishing pole, the hay-mow tumble and the eating cherries up a tree.

There is no mistaking it. Old age never comes to the man who keeps up the loves of his boyhood days; who owns all the sunlight, the shining streams, the clover fields, and who never loses his appetite for stewed chicken and gravy.

ASPARAGUS.

IT is always a great start in the glory of the year when your dealer looks up at you with a confidence in his voice and a boast in his eyes and says, "these are home-grown." There is something in the words that trickles down into one's fancy and brightens the joy of living. It was said of a bunch of asparagus, the amiablest vegetable that comes to the table, and thus elated by the grace of its freshness, one is apt to pay the extra price, and take it home as the fairest triumph of the early spring.

So fine a food is it that one cannot complain of the faded and stringy stalks that were hurried from Southern soils for weeks past. In fact it has been thus far the charmingest favor of the blue skies and the gentle showers, whose spirit is enfolded in the

tender herb, and whose sense of tranquillity gets into one's heart like a pleasant dream. It is the mildest mannered of all plants, and when one eats a dish of it, he stops his quarrel, looks out with a friendly smile, and says a kind word to the one next to him.

You remember the man who fed on the flesh of lions, how the fight and the thirst of blood got into him. Eating asparagus puts one away over on the other side of the circle, away from blazing suns, into the region of quiet stars, where meditation twinkles with sweet thoughts toward everybody. That is the mission of asparagus. Eat it, if lovingly served, and see how serene and kindly the whole world seems and everybody in it.

Never thought of it in this light! Never thought but that a dish of asparagus and a link of bologna had the same mission in this world! Dear, dear, how shiftless some people are!

Why the science of good things is as definite as the science of geology, or chemistry, or astronomy. Eat the tender stalks of asparagus, and one will go out and shake hands with his enemy, but let him fill up on red beef and he will hate him worse. Don't take our word. Try it, only let the fair affinities of asparagus have a good chance.

* * *

TO BOIL AN EGG.

A FRIEND has laid upon our table a dozen fresh eggs (the indulgent reader will pardon the professional phraseology), with the request that an article be written, telling "how to boil an egg." Now this is a very reasonable request, and a compliance with it is abundantly remunerated by the eggs themselves.

In the first place, see that the egg is

of the finest quality — like this dozen. There is as much difference among eggs as there is among horses, or watermelons, or poetry. Blood may not always tell in human experience, but it does in eggs. One can readily recognize the delicate taste of an egg that has a fine ancestral strain. There is nothing strong or murky about it. One cannot define taste any more than he can dispute about it, and can only refer to the delicate flavor of an egg of lofty strain, as he speaks of the sweet fragrance of a lily of the valley — how delightful!

But this doesn't boil the egg. There is a right way to do that, even if the egg is old and decrepit, and has languished long in cold storage. There is an art in the method, and necessarily so, for art is the preservative of excellence. Heat the water till it comes to a boil, pour it into a dish or pan, a pint for each egg, put in the eggs and

see that the water covers them, put a cover on the dish, and set it away from the heat, let it stand seven minutes, take out, break and eat. Then you have an egg, soft-boiled and done, every particle of it.

Of course, the egg can be softer or harder, as the time is made shorter or longer, but don't get into those prize-ring or delicate stomach vagaries that demand a harder or softer egg. An egg boiled this way is perfection. It meets every hygienic demand. It responds to the clamor of the soul.

THOSE BATTER CAKES.

THE editor of the Sandusky Register has been incurring our displeasure for some time. He has thrown out, now and then, sly insinuations that our reform in behalf of the poetic appetite was not working well, and intimated as the reason of it, that we did not ourselves know what was good to eat. That issue we must leave with the gentle reader. We shall always abstain from making our weakness the subject of public controversy.

But we are at liberty to philosophize upon the attitude of the editor of The Register. The fact is, we thus far omitted all reference to his favorite viand, and, consequently, he has lost some faith in our ability to sustain the high duty upon which we have entered. But we never had any intention of leaving out our dear

friend's batter cakes. We were waiting for mid-winter, when in a "clement and amnestical" attitude of mind, as Sunset Cox would say, and when the laughing sunbeams played in fields of snow, and the curling of smoke dangled from the idle north wind, we could meet the batter cake on its own plane of purity and delight.

It is an auroral flash out of the fame of the editor of *The Register*. He concocted them. He showed us how to pile joy upon joy. They are simply pancakes — wheat batter cakes, baked as light and tender as a new snowfall, and these piled one upon another, six, eight, ten, and the interstices reeking with sugar and butter, and over all a torrent of rich cream, and there is a combination —. No, sir; we never intended to omit that from the joyous refrains of the

intellectual appetite. It stands out in memory like the gates of the dawn.

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SPARERIBS.

BEHOLD the hefty shote! See his rotund proportions, aglow with oleaginous glory! Watch him as he crunches the grain from the cob, changing the richness of the field into the incense of his body, as surely, as gently, as the plant changes the sunlight into a flower. It is a vision as full of anticipation as a trip to the seaside or a visit to the mountain air.

Behold again that shote in his final analysis! Here is a table spread white, and in the center, a platter filled to the brim with spareribs. The scene changes. Here is where the heart meanders along the lanes of delight. Lift a section of that unctious frame-

work to your plate, and behold the delicious membrane between the ribs, as sweet a morsel as a blend of honey and cream.

It is what considerate nature provides as an offset to these keen October days. Blow, winds, and beat, rains, and sting, frosts — that spare-rib simply makes a joy of you all. How one thanks the cold breezes, that come tearing around the house, with their menace of sleet and ice, if he is only gnawing at a sparerib! His only concern is that the membrane is all too slight. But he remembers that nature is sparing of her richest gifts, so with that satisfaction that goes with a grateful heart, he nibbles and gnaws till the last shred of muscle is gone from that fair bone; and he looks anxiously over at the platter for more. Will he dare take more? Wouldn't you?

A BAKED POTATO.

THERE are said to be 1148 different varieties of potatoes. The best kind, so far discovered, is the baked potato. Of course, the potato grows down in the chambers of the earth, away from the sunshine, the jolly zephyrs and the songs of the birds. It is down there among the worms and the creatures of the dark, where the cold rains huddle about it.

But, although its environment is dismal, and it holds no communion with the lovely visions of the air, dear old mother Nature takes good care of it, and suffuses its humble being with many happy qualities, through the mystic chemistry of the soil, which burst into all the exuberance of a flower, when gently baked and broken open by a loving hand.

Then, that snowy, bosom-like ten-

derness exudes an aroma as delicate as a lily's, and whets the appetite like a dish of ambrosia. One wonders how it can be so, that this soggy tuber develops itself into a concretion of creamy spray, when submitted to the friendly heat of the oven. But there it is, spread out in raptures on the plate, and anointed with butter and sprinkled with salt, the fairest dish of health and virtue and loving kindness in all the menus of delight.

There are mashed potatoes, fried potatoes, boiled potatoes, creamed potatoes, Saratoga chips and divers other sorts of greasy, watery, woody concoctions of the humble tuber; but nowhere resides the brooding tenderness of its loving mother as when baked to the turn of an autumn leaf and breaking into a smile before you. But one must not bake a potato clumsily, dumping it into any kind of an old oven, and giving it no care, no pa-

tience, no kindly touch. Give it these, and of the 1148 different kinds of potato you will love the baked the best.

* * *

BUCKEYE BAKED BEANS.

I T has long been on our mind to write a philippic against the Boston baked bean. We have now been spared the sorry task, because of the assurance of that erudite iconoclast of all shams, the Clerk of the Day, in the Boston Transcript, who declares that "no Boston baked bean has ever come into existence west of the Hudson river."

In eating the Boston baked bean out here in Ohio we had often been mortified at not reaching the standard of Boston culture, because of a lack of appreciation of the bean it worships. And so it is a joy to know that the

sweet rank mess that one gets west of the Hudson is not the bean that inspired Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The tendency to take the Boston baked bean on faith, that it was so transcendental in its nature that crude tastes could not relish its virtues, has flitted away, and left one to fall back on the Buckeye baked bean with an unmixed joy.

It was a jealousy, founded upon a faint suspicion, that has always bothered us, and now, freed from that, we can set up the Buckeye baked bean as the unparalleled bean of all creation. And that is what it is. There is no sweet, brown concoction with a musty gravy all through it; but it is a creamy bronze, that holds intact all the odors of the morning dews and the fresh south wind. Oh, this horrid practice of adding spices and greases and everlasting boilings and bakings

to stifle those delicate unctions that mother Nature has, out of her deep devotion to the bean, imbedded in its snowy structure!

In the Buckeye baked bean this is not so. You get the bean and that delicate flavor which floats along the channels of the appetite, like the breath of the violet down the valley. We mean the real Buckeye baked bean at the old home, which mother used to bring on the table in a big pan, with the cracklings grinning in the center, and the bronze crystals smiling and crowding all about it. We don't believe Emerson ever saw such a bean east of the Hudson; nor Alcott, nor Longfellow, nor Channing, nor Hedge. Ah, how deeply one may grieve over their misfortune!

LEMON PIE.

SOMEONE asked, the other day,
“Don’t you like lemon pie?” The
answer went out swift as lightning,
“Yes.” Of course, nobody ever refuses
lemon pie. One might as well think of
refusing the sunshine on a doleful
day. And, by the way, doesn’t it really
remind one of sunshine — a great rift
of golden air overspread by a white
cumulus cloud, drifting away on
ranges of delight?

Now, a lemon pie occupies an attitude of its own. It is a combination of the fairest graces of the food world — corn, eggs and milk — the very sound of which is a symphony of health. They may be accounted the virtues of the material world, and when fair hands mingle them together and dash into the delicious compound the wine of tropical sunshine, and

stir it all together with a song and a merry word, there you have a mixture that makes the appetite bound and the anticipations snap.

And then to think that this aggregation of health and joy must be crowned with innocence, which it is, for there is nothing in all the culinary labyrinth so pure, so modest, so ambrosial, as the meringue that covers the glory of the lemon pie, like a bridal veil covers the bride. That is the lemon pie.

And now, if the gentle lady who has made the pastry has kneaded into it her loving fancies and other sweet things which are necessary to the sublimation of material blessings, there you have a pie, attuned to the song of the aeolian harp, the rhythm of the dawn and the poetry of the October woods. Sink your silver fork down through those strata of snow, of gold and sunny strand, lift the glowing

morsel to your lips, and thank heaven that you are alive and that the universe belongs to you.



MAPLE MOLASSES.

THE first sign of life the old earth shows in this "neck of the woods," after the sun has turned northward, is manifest in the old sugar tree. The new year really begins with the winter solstice, for when the sun starts back north again the earth feels the thrill and promise of his coming. And there is nothing that so happily proclaims his return as the flow of sap in the old sugar tree.

For months it has been sleeping and dreaming and nestling in the bosom of good Mother Earth, and drawing from her veins, through a thousand meandering rootlets, the

sweetness and richness of her nature. Can't you taste it, when you trail a bit of warm biscuit through a dainty pool of maple molasses and then administer the dripping fragment to your eager desire? Is there not in it some dim, mysterious flavor that seems like a special benediction to mortals, something saved from the wreckage of Paradise as a favor to mankind?

But up comes the sun, unfurling his radiance across the snows, warming the north wind and knocking the icicles from the eaves, and down in the earth the little roots catch the meaning of his return, take up the tension of life, press out its wine, and send it up into the big tree as an oblation to the ever-mindful sun.

And then one morning, after a frosty night through which the north wind sighed, comes along a man and opens a way for that sensitive fluid to come out into the sunlight, and it

exudes in sweet and crystal drops till it fills the bucket and trough and then come the boiling and the skimming and the sugaring off, and the merry damsels with their mouths filled with sweetness. It is a festal day in the bush, when the heart of earth glories in the joy of his children.

And the maple molasses — who can analyze its mystic flavor or explain how it changes a warm biscuit or a buckwheat cake into something almost celestial? Here it is — a composite of the rose's fragrance, the honeysuckle's sweetness, and the sigh of the north wind across the sunlit air — here right in front of you, and here is a plate towering with buckwheats. Adieu!

"TURKEY-STUFFING."

THERE are cranks and cranks pushing themselves into public notice at all times and seasons of the year, but the most pronounced and aggravating one is the deluded epicure who suggests that there should be no stuffing in a roast turkey. He says it conflicts with the sweet flavor and delicate aroma of the bird. Not a bit of it. That fellow has never tasted stuffing—not the mild, mill-dewed crumbly dressing that is scraped onto the side of the plate—but the real stuffing, spooned out of the rich chambers of the fowl, in great masses that fill the room with fragrance and the heart with joy.

It is the soul of the turkey, stuffing is. With the turkey itself, one is always bothered about what part one will have; whether he will have white

meat or dark meat; a drumstick or a pinion; but with the stuffing it is always the same; the only question is how much one dares to eat. And then that little sagey odor floating about — it's just as sweet as the smell of orange blossoms on a wedding day. And perchance that faraway, sublimated suggestion of an onion, fluttering about one's nostrils like the dream of some dear home-coming realized at last.

Turkey straight, without stuffing; no, indeed! It is the longing of civilization to mix with naked nature the sweet subconsciousness of the human heart and garnish it with dream, and poetry, and the love of things undefined and divine. That's stuffing. Down with any reform in roast turkey. The grandmothers gave it a sanctity that will be downright sacrilege to rob it of. It will never be improved while the world stands. Another piece

of the white meat and more stuffing,
please.

* * *

PLUM PUDDING.

EVERY lover of plum pudding will be under deep obligations to the London Lancet for commending this delicious compound as a wholesome diet. It declares it is hardly possible to conceive a more complete food. There had always been a suspicion that it had so many good things in it that it was consequently too much of the good thing. That seemed to be pretty fair logic, and so people have not taken to it strenuously. They have nibbled at it, as if their consciences were all the time protesting.

But the innocence of plum pudding is now established. It is a hale and hearty food, to be eaten up on the high levels of baked potatoes and mush

and milk. Nor is this any guesswork. The noble editor of *The Lancet*, true to his scientific instincts, has analyzed the whole business and tabulated the life-giving ingredients, so that no more need there be any lazy dawdling over a heaped-up plate of plum pudding.

The analysis has brought into view a full array of all the elements of a perfect food. There are the proteids, the fats, the carbohydrates and the mineral salts, in all their due proportion. There is a satisfaction in knowing a perfect harmony exists between the proteids and the fats. You have tasted something particularly fine in your plum pudding? That's it. And when it comes to carbohydrates, the last doubt is gone when we know there is plenty of them. The carbohydrate is that peculiar quality that makes you steer your plate up for a second helping.

And then going hand in hand with

the proteids and fats are the mineral salts, that are always a guaranty against dyspepsia or stomachic revolts of any nature. But as effective as these agents of dietetic perfection are, we extol the glory of the carbohydrates. Get plenty of them, and you will get plenty, if you put in lots of suet, currants, raisins, and make it large, and round, and rich. But mind the main point; eat it until you can eat no more, and if you get sick, it is the turkey and the salad and the other common things, that made you sick.

BOILED CABBAGE.

SOME weeks ago a gentle reader wrote to the editor asking him to write a little article on "Boiled Cabbage," seeing that he had been indulging himself in freaks of fancy over sundry mild and mellifluous dishes. He hasn't done so. He has not yet entered upon that category of good things that depends upon the philosophic spirit to enjoy a full effulgence of their virtues.

There is somewhat in boiled cabbage that is hampered by doleful memories. There are blue Mondays, wash-days, boiled beef and potatoes that have lost the last trace of their lovely flavor, and these associations hang on boiled cabbage like a weight of woe. In the strawberry or the cantaloupe or the spring chicken one can see blending all the graces of nature. He

can tell just where the zephyrs play, the dews sparkle, or the sunbeams knit in their vital forces.

So many viands gain favor and flavor through the imagination. A bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked, white-armed, cheery, singing damsel never made a bad pie or pudding, and many a dainty dish evokes such fancies out in the culinary rooms. But alas, boiled cabbage paints no such pictures on the vision. It is rather of some lorn woman, tired and impatient, uttering discordant ejaculations and spatting the young ones as they pass through the sudsy-smelling kitchen — boiling cabbage because there is not a speck of poetry in the day's occupations. You have only to toss it in the pot to boil — no charming damsel or song of robin or smile of ripening harvest fields about it — it's just a "biled dinner."

And yet there is somewhat stealing

out of the havoc of circumstances and the riot of recollection, some strain of old days, in which untoward memories have a fringe of color that gives to a dish of boiled cabbage a glory all its own. There is even a certain loveliness in its lack of romance. We don't mind to take a dish.

* * *

YOUR DESSERT.

IF you seek a severe and simple life, where health and joy abound, and nervous anxiety keeps its distance, where headaches and heartaches are not known, and peevishness and unkindness are ashamed to be seen; if you seek such a life, and there is such a life accessible to all who are willing to sacrifice mere sensuous extravagance and betake themselves to the simple things — as simple as God's air, and

water, and sunlight, and thus build up body and spirit with their strength — if you desire these things, we say, and hope to live a life of simplicity, of purity, of innocence and to enjoy a clear head, a clean conscience and a stalwart stomach, we will tell you what to do — be careful of your dessert; approach with profound suspicion that plum pudding, that mince pie, that charlotte russe and that angel food.

But we are engaged in no pessimistic foray. We would not imitate that horde that cry down abuse and never hint of something better in its place. We do — a nice rice pudding aggravatingly besprinkled with raisins. Quid rides? In the language of the Latin poet — why do you laugh? We know. You never tasted any rice pudding. You have spooned into a detestible conglomeration of something called rice pudding, but the angelic kind, the snowy rice suffused with an

emulsion of pure milk and fresh laid eggs and blinking with raisins, and all baked in an oven with a temperature as gentle as the radiant cook's should be, and you have a dessert that is akin to the blue skies and the summer afternoons — something that will fill the head with sweet thoughts and make the stomach smile.

After all, food is not just what you pull from a branch, dig out of the ground or empty from a barrel — what there is really good in it comes from the cook who bedews it with her sweet thoughts and lightens it with her smile and fills it with the grace of her deeds. Haven't you seen such a person? Get her to make you a rice pudding with raisins in it.

PINEAPPLES.

THE pineapple crop of the South is grand. From Jacksonville 25 solid carloads go North every day. And this year they are said to be very fine. The lagging season seems to have been good for them — bundled up more sunbeams in them and caught up more of the breath of the flowery air. A ripe, luscious pineapple is a sugar water trough, a bee gum, a rose bush and a love song, all blended together in one sweet symphony; and it will chase off a case of dyspepsia quicker than a whole pharmacopoeia could do it.

The pineapple is not a spoon victual. Nor should one eat it with a fork. That is, if it is one of the luscious redolent kind, that streams with the fatness of the sunshine. He should cut out a full slice crosswise, at least half

an inch thick; and then, with the core as an axis, let it rotate between the lips, and as it goes, snap off a bite anon until the mouth is filled with the ooze of tropical mornings.

No one loves Nature who meets her mincingly. She comes to you beaming with joy and you must receive her with wide-open arms. And there is nowhere that this spirit of appreciation and surrender can be better illustrated than in eating a big, juicy pineapple.

SAUSAGE.

THERE is a man at our boarding house calling for sausage. He saw the glisten of the frost on the roof of the coalshed and caught a whiff of a cold breeze coming in at the open door, and so he sighs for sausage. He wants to feel the sweet oxygen of this oleaginous compound, dancing down the arteries and burning incense on the altars of the capillaries.

The landlady doesn't seem to hear, and other ladies at the table show no emotion over the faltering appeal. They haven't the sinewy stomachs and lungs that hold bushels of air, that the men have. They can get along without sausage. They can flourish on lamb chops and frizzled dried beef, but for men, sausage, made of young pork that has been fed on yellow corn and the mast of the hickory woods,

and compounded, fat and lean, into an unctious mass, with just enough pepper and a little more sage, to bring out the innate sweetness of the mixture, and then you have a viand that looks down on fried oysters, lobster and duck, and laughs at the chills in the air and the hungry cold skies of winter.

Who has not been in some country house, about butchering time, when the good wife brings in a great platter of sausage cakes to grace the supper table? Then is when sausage reaches the summit of its perfection, when it hides within its rich recesses, the very nerve and fiber of lusty nature, and moves a man to say when looking up the heights of brave endeavor, "I'll climb them all." We are speaking of that good old country sausage, that has been mixed with the love of a good woman's heart and the fragrance of rooted ground where nuts are hid

— if you have a taste for celestial things, you will recognize it. If you don't, let it pass — we are writing for kindred souls.

* * *

IN PLACE OF TURKEY.

THE rallying point of a New Year's feast is rather difficult for one to reach, since Christmas has claimed the turkey, and what is left of it, has been gently seeping down through the days till now. This is a great disappointment, since a nicely roasted turkey, generously stuffed and diligently basted, is a food that challenges the appetite with more assurance than anything that can be put upon the table.

Has anyone ever introspected his own longing when some slow and awkward carver was tackling the anatomy

of the bird? One's impatience almost revolts at the lethargy of the operation, as he watches the brown thighs slowly tumble and the white breast glint at languid intervals. It is during these waiting moments, that one wonders if there could be anything as good as roast turkey.

And when the day is gone, and the cold carcass that one nibbles at so happily, and the silver slices off of the unctuous bosom, and the redolent hash, and the skelemonic soup, make up the diet of the days that follow, one does not rail against the turkey, or find fault with the cook — he only says this is plenty of a good thing, so give us a rest.

And then New Year's comes on, and there is nothing in the world that can take the place of turkey. Forthwith a discussion ensues at the lunch table — what shall we have for dinner tomorrow to celebrate the day? If it was

Thanksgiving or Christmas, there would be no discussion. That issue is already solved. But what of the morrow, and then comes the mention of fish, chicken, oysters, spareribs, tenderloin, roast duck, lobster, goose and other things that flit about under the zenith of turkey. And when one is finally chosen, and the feast is spread one cannot help thinking of that grand turkey he had on Christmas.

FRIED OYSTERS.

“THE fried oyster forever,” said our companion of the tripod. He is the man to loll back on the sunny slopes of life. Forever; that means all the time — never anything but fried oysters. That’s right; come out flatfooted and shake the finger of scorn at the man who wants them raw, or stewed, or scalloped or any other dreary style.

The oyster is the noblest animal of the sad sea waves. It is a sort of insignificant thing that one cares not to investigate too closely, but when handled with exquisite touch and tender emotion, it seems as if the whole ocean was made for it. The rocks and the sand, and the moss and the green waters, have combined to confer upon it the sweet incense of their being; and now how best to treat

this tender grace of the bonnie blue ocean? Fry it. Now, don't go into stale homilies about frying. A noble quality is sometimes served by a rude process. It is so in frying an oyster. Suppose that an oyster had never been fried, what a bleak desert of human experience would we look out upon!

But somehow or other, the oyster is so constructed, its palatial glory so snugly hidden by the delicate valves, that it requires the sudden snap of the skillet to unfold the richness of its recesses. That is what it means. That is what you taste in the fried oyster. Do you get it anywhere else? Of course, it must be fried right; by someone whose soul bubbles over with the thought of good things. There are fried oysters — the kind that are frizzled to a cinder or are entombed in a pudding of some sort — the virtue has gone out of them. They make the very seaweed groan. But the kind

that is fried to a nut-brown, leaving the oyster intact and the mood of the green waves and the lovely moss all through it — then “the fried oyster forever.”

* * *

BUCKWHEAT CAKES.

THERE is nothing in this world that so completely surrounds the human appetite, and makes it a willing captor, on one of these cold December mornings, when the boreal blast comes rushing down and infuses itself in the very brick and mortar of one's home, as a dish of hot buckwheat cakes, generously moistened with a sage-spiked gravy off a reeking hot pork steak. This is not altogether a delicate combination, but it is, if one takes into account the day, and the freezing air outside, and the shivering

snow flakes, that are trying to slip in under the windows to get warm.

It is then that one does not want to toy with torrid food or spend the time crunching cream puffs. He wants something that fights the polar chill. The Almighty made the buckwheat cake to do that very thing; and the pork steak to assist it. Now, some people are squeamish about pork, and suspect it too strong for their delicate digestion. Go to. What is that kindly odor floating like a sweet spirit out of the kitchen — that flavor of the frying pork steak, and the delicate incense of the sage, along with it, and the mouth-watering sight of that brown pier of buckwheat cakes — what is it all, but loving nature's urgent invitation to abandon your cowardly suspicion and partake?

Of course, this does not apply to May-day, when the johnny-jump-ups are peeping from under the dead

leaves and the soft zephyrs are playing tag with the summer sunshine — but now. Look without; listen to that Arctic roar, see the snow flakes freezing to death, hear those icicles falling from the neighboring roof — is it time for strawberries and parfait? No, indeed; pass the buckwheat cakes and more of the steak and gravy, please; let the polar winds howl!

ABOUT CAKE.

THE other day, at a little party, the subject of cake came up, and the conversation fluttered and bubbled as if a wedding dress swept by. The subject is chuck full of ideas, opinions, tastes and fancies. There are as many kinds of cakes as there are kinds of leaves on the trees or of women's hats; and there are many kinds of the same kind, too. In fact, there never was exactly the same kind of cake made from the same recipe.

For instance, two women may be in the same kitchen — two women with two souls that beat as one — and each make a plain cup cake from the same recipe, and when the cakes are baked, cut and tasted, there is a difference between them. This explains why some women are good for one kind of cake and some for another. There

are women, for instance, in one neighborhood, who are famous for their marble cake, their fruit cake, their mountain cake, their angel cake, and so on. (When we write our book on psychology we will explain all this more fully).

There was a woman once who was great on jelly cake. Now, to be great on jelly cake is to be really, truly great. Pound cake is good, and so is fruit cake, spice cake, chocolate cake, and several kinds of cake, but jelly cake, the good old kind, where the golden strata are bound together by an emulsion of red sunbeams — a monumental mass of alternating joy — then you get cake. Not the fashionable kind, the dilettante stuff, to be handled only with white kid gloves, but richness dripping with gladness, the fingers tinted with the morning sunshine, and the mouth tinged with the hues of the sunset. That's jelly

cake — the kind that used to be in the long ago, when joy for joy's sake filled the earth.

But, alas, none of the women mentioned it, and it was noticed that they classed cake with fudge, caramels, egg-kisses and unsubstantial things that have renounced the idea of a wholesome and hilarious appetite. That is the reason that men have abandoned cake and taken to limburger cheese and rye bread.

A SWEET POTATO.

THE character of a potato, especially of a sweet potato, is determined by the soil in which it grows. If the ground is sour, and soggy, and clammy, the sweet potato will not attain to the sweetness of its own sweet self. It loses its nature in such dreary environments, and becomes a soaked and sodden vegetable, that has wholly lost its sweet and sunny disposition.

But take one grown out on the sandy slopes, where the sunbeams play and warm breezes roam, and the earth is soft and gentle, and where the birds come down to woo and wash their wings in the clean dirt — there is where the sweet potato grows that is a sweet potato. Don't slash it or stab it with a knife, but part it lovingly with the thumbs, so that the filaments of gold may break away from

each other and reveal their riches. You have seen it, just that way, of course? Then you have seen it as the good Lord intended it.

There is the butter; spread it on thick, if it is good and smells of the bloom of the honey fields; if it is not, get up and leave the table and go out and bury your thoughts in the noise of the streets or in the blue of the skies. But if it is good, and holds in loving companionship the essence of the clover and the dew dropped from the morning sun, marry the redolent butter and the golden sweet potato in happy wedlock and stick to the honeymoon as long as it lasts.

That is the romance of the true sweet potato. When you meet with one, though you know it is a root, you will not fail, if you open your heart wide, to detect in it a shining trace of the flavor of the skies.

RABBIT.

RABBITS are plentiful this year. They always are. It is a way they have. A gentleman who was out hunting the other day said he scared up 20 in one field. Because they are so many, they are not popular with the hunter, and, for the same reason, they are not prized as a delicacy.

We despise such frivolous reasons. It is the judgment of a wild-eyed aristocracy. As well might one say the air is not good, or the goldenrod is not beautiful, as to depreciate the rabbit. There is nothing in sylvan life so suggestive of its grace and innocence, as the cotton-tail flashing across the field. It is a scene that is in accord with the heart-beat of nature, and when a fellow sees it the whole world sweeps into chaos and is forgotten until cotton-tail disappears.

The rabbit is the game of the simple-living nature, and it has the glory of a generous benefaction. A man will stand all day in a swamp to get three bites of a woodcock when he can get a whole meal just as good by crossing a field. Not so good? — there you go on your old money value again. Take a young rabbit; broil it, bake it or stew it; do it kindly, with a smiling eye and a smacking lip; talk of the rural haunts and the company of the birds and the wild flowers, and those sweet influences that nestle about the career of the rabbit, and then put it upon the shining dish on the snow-white table.

Be perfectly serene; tell a story of the redbird, the fluttering stream, or the persimmon tree, and then, unloosing a section of the spine, inlaid with muscles of congested sunshine and the sweet odor of the woods — eat. You may talk of your clam, your partridge,

your venison, your terrapin; but not one of them reaches the divinity of that morsel of rabbit. These are the days for the candid soul to regale itself.

* * *

CRIME AND DUMPLINGS.

THE state health officer of Louisiana says 90 per cent. of the crime of the country is due to bad cooking. Of course, this is a gross exaggeration. Bad cooking has its serious consequences, as everything bad has. But there is some question about the enormity of its deeds. For instance, bad cooking is not conducive to much eating, while good cooking is, and the doctors say the health of the people is seriously damaged by their eating too much.

Take, for instance, an apple dumpling. Now, if there is anything in

the world that is intrinsically bad, it is a bad apple dumpling. A man gets more than enough if he eats half a one. But if there is anything in the world that is intrinsically good, it is a well-constructed, light-jacketed juicily appled, apple dumpling. It is one of the gentlest benedictions of the rosy orchard and golden harvest, especially when it comes from the hands of some woman who bristles with smiles and intelligence.

It is then when a fellow jumps on his hygiene and crushes all the laws of dietetics, and eats dumpling to the verge of apoplexy. But if it is the other kind, the soggy sort, with an uncooked apple buried in it, and the whole mess swimming in skimmed milk, then a few nibbles will do, and one leaves it with a lacerated recollection. No one violates the moral law against overeating who tackles a bad dumpling. Such people never go to

the penitentiary; if they do, it is the lack of apple dumpling that takes them there.

The Louisiana health officer is a novice in sociology. He should know that the bad apple dumpling keeps men out of the penitentiary, and that it is the good ones that send them there. As for us, prepare the cell.

* * *

HOMINY.

THAT old combination of hog and hominy does not intone sweetly, and its suggestion of old plantation life down in the South, is not wholly pleasing, but when the clouds are filled with snow and the north wind whizzes around the corners, one's heart turns from ice cream and lady fingers and souffle things, to the pith and essence of nature's bounty.

In the beginning, hominy was concocted for the strength of days — to give muscle, brain, vigor, manhood unto men, and at the same time was bestowed upon it an unction that awakened the appetite and roused the affections. Did you ever strike it just the right way? Not, of course, at a hotel or restaurant, where a mild, milky mess comes on the table, with a wilted taste about it, that makes one feel that the sunbeams of the world had died out. Not that kind. It afflicts the menu.

In the market place stands a woman selling hominy. Buy a quart. This is not an advertisement. It is a beneficence. Then go over to the meat stalls and buy dainty slices of young pig — not hunks of hog like the benighted do — but tender slices that cover the bottom of a skillet well. Fry them gently. Fill the kitchen with the aroma, till you can imagine the

walls are covered with acorns and hickory nuts. Lift the pork pieces from the skillet and put in the quart of hominy. It is already boiled and all that is needed is to warm it through — to give the acorn flavor and the hickory nut twang a chance to get into the shining grains and make them burst with joy.

Then fill your plate and let delight have its way. It is not mere provender that is before you. It is the romance of the cornfield, its bannered glory and its inherent joy. Eat till the last laughing grain is gone and then stand forth and defy Euroclydon.

SOMETHING ABOUT TURKEY.

THE symbol of Thanksgiving is the turkey. Somehow, one always suggests the other. Thanksgiving hints of plenty and goodness. So does turkey. Behold the ample fowl on the table today. See its bulging bosom, its monumental legs, its pillowy thighs, its savory pinions, its broad and beaming back, shining with luxury, and, protruding from the gorgeous recesses, a handicraft of pungent odors that search out all the delightful fancies of the heart. And there is plenty of it — plenty of white meat and plenty of dark, for everybody. And the plenty runs over into days beyond. The turkey outlasts Thanksgiving and reappears in soups, hashes and bony tidbits that are never to be scorned.

An illustration of the plentitude of this noble fowl is given by E. D. Mans-

field in his memoirs. He was a cadet at West Point, and in recognition of his father, who was then surveyor general of Ohio, the boy was invited to dine with the superintendent of the school. Young Mansfield was somewhat embarrassed by his august environment and was awkward in showing off his good training. Turkey was served, and when the superintendent had carved the tempting creature and spread its aromatic fragments over the platter, he asked the bashful boy what part of the turkey he should like, and the boy blurting out the deep emotion of his soul, said, "Imparticular, big piece, please." There is the real turkey intuition — big piece, please. Let it be the keynote of today.

And besides the plenty, there is the goodness. There is no place where plenty and goodness hug each other so lovingly as in a nicely roasted turkey. When one thinks how plenty it

is, and how good it is, then the thanksgiving spirit takes right hold of a man, and he looks out on the world and beholds a sunny afternoon, filled with flowers and the songs of birds, even if at the time a "norther" swoops down with a load of sleet and chill. But it's goodness! Could it be better, seeing it was created in the beginning to fill the heart with hope, gladness and thanksgiving. Imparticular, big piece, please.

DOESN'T CARE FOR LEMON
PIE.

WHEN a modest friend suggested to us to sing the praises of lemon pie, it was in perfect consonance with our disposition to do it, but the recollection of the loving task is streaked with regret, because our good friend of the Marion Star doesn't like lemon pie. We do not fall out with people whose tastes stray off into the regions of iridescent vagaries. They have a perfect right to stroll whither their lawful desires lead them.

Perhaps our friend doesn't know what lemon pie is — that congestion of sunlight and smiling damsel and soft glow of bridal veil — can't see it? No harm done. People differ, and pies, too. A man one time objected to our strawberry shortcake. He didn't care for it. Did we reply with a flash

of venom? Not at all. People who like all these good things, upon which our dear mother earth has pronounced a loving benediction, must be a part of the silent sweetness of all good, and permit those who desire to depart quietly, with their fried onions, blood pudding and limburger cheese. Ah, we know what is the trouble with our friend now; we know why he turns up his nose at lemon pie; he is hungry, and he sniffs the frankfurter and kraut across the way. There isn't in this world a fairer response to the voice of real, downright hunger than a great dish of frankfurter and kraut. There is somewhat in it that meets every little appeal that the clamoring appetite sends forth. There is no time for a man to dally with the south wind, the vapor-braided blue, the songs of the birds, or the rose-cheeked maiden stirring her love glances in the snowy paste; no, no, he is hungry; he

wants great solid chunks of food to fill a clamoring stomach. He should have them. He should have what he craves. Lemon pie will not do.

There are two phases of life—the sunshine and the shadow, the zephyr and the cyclone, the smile and the frown, the kindly word and the harsh tone, the lemon pie and the frankfurter. They are all a part of life — a necessary part — but we are only choosing that symphony which is a blend of sunshine, of zephyrs, of smiles, of kindly words and lemon pie; but when we meet our friend and he proposes a dish of frankfurters we shall respond, gratefully yours.

CODFISH BALLS.

CODFISH has always been regarded as a brainy food. It is said Boston depends upon it for the maintenance of its intellectual vigor. And out West, people have caught up the fancy, and imitate Boston, upon the idea that this odorous nutriment is of decided advantage to the mental activity.

Who does not revel in delicious codfish balls for breakfast? To the aromatic delight with which they suffuse the soul, is added that placid confidence in their restorative effects upon the mental caliber. It is said by those who know, that one fishball will enable a man to solve an intricate mathematical problem almost at sight, and on two fishballs, he can write a poem or a soul stirring tale of social folly.

They have got onto this trick out in

Boston, and just now, when they suspect that other people are getting acquainted with their secret, they distribute the baleful intelligence that the codfish is mostly poisoned these days by boric acid. They are making a terrible ado about this discovery, so much so, that people are losing their grasp on the enticing odor of the rollicking fishball.

And to make this stab at refined taste more vital, the dairy commissioner of Connecticut, in utter forgetfulness of its wooden nutmegs, has specified the beautiful boneless cod as the peculiar conservatory of the deadly boric. This is the kind that brains hanker after — and to emphasize their jealousy, they propose to confiscate every package of the boneless that wends its way down their way.

To cover up their maledictions and hide their envious designs they have included sausage and maple syrup in

their anathema. This may work for sausage and maple, but no boric acid shall stand in the way of the intellectual codfish ball.

* * *

A CRANBERRY ALARM.

THERE is another cloud athwart the bow of promise. We are told that the cranberry bog is acting up, owing to the July droughts, and that the prospect of the ruby berry is ragged with doubts. There is dark alarm in such news, for of all the berries that drink the sunlight the cranberry is the most exhilarating and faithful. There is a tang in the taste of it that makes the eyes glitter and the heart beat high. There is nothing that blushes in this jolly universe that has so keen a thrill to it as the robust cranberry, that has been well managed.

And then, we are thinking of that beautiful companionship with the roast turkey, a companionship almost as inseparable as lover and sweetheart — that bite of white breast and that spoonful of ruddy sunlight — oh, the awful bog, how dare it tangle up our anticipations in such cruel fashion? A short cranberry crop, just at the time when the grasshoppers are plentiful and the turkeys are fat!

But do not let us repine. The bogs are always making wry faces and doing their worst, but when the big plump turkey grins on the platter and scatters its incense upon a dozen smiling countenances, the glow of the cranberry will be over it all, confirming that edict of Nature, that roast turkey and cranberries shall go together and lead the procession of all good things.

HASH.

OUR friend of the Gallipolis Tribune is clamoring for hash. He is worse off than the Sandusky or the Marion editor — he is not satisfied with chicken pie, strawberry shortcake, sausage and buckwheat cakes, or lemon pie — he wants hash.

Hash is an afterthought. It appears as an expediency and would hardly figure in the van of a noble dietary. It is a compromise affair, and as all compromises are, it lacks the pristine vigor of the original ingredients. A sloop captain once asked his cook: "What have you for dinner?" "Roast beef, potatoes and fruit," answered the cook. "What kind of fruit?" asked the captain. "Onions," said the cook. Now, anybody might guess what they had for supper. It was the conglomeration of things that had served their highest mission.

But do not think that the function of hash is low down in life's experience. Like everything else that seems common, it is susceptible of the highest development. There are hashes that the occupants of the sty would spurn, and there are hashes again that would make a queen's mouth water. And here we must remind the gentle reader of the lesson running through all these articles on good things to eat — that it is not the eggs, the berries, the butter, the cream, the meat, the flour, that constitutes the excellence or glory of a viand — it is the delicate fancy, the graceful touch, the loving purpose, the scintillating brain, the smiling presence of the woman who does the cooking.

It is these qualities that can take a little cold meat, a little cold potatoes, a little cold onion, and mixing them together and sprinkling a little of this

and that with a few delicate flirts of the fingers, and then singing a song into the simmering mixture, turn out a dish of hash that Olympus might crave. Haven't you eaten such hash — something so much finer than the ragged remnants which are put into it, that you pass up your plate the second and third time, and wonder and wonder whence comes its glory? Do you remember that little line in Richard Realf's "Symbolism"—"never a daisy that grows, but a mystery guideth its growing" — it is just so with hash.

HOW SMALL A TURKEY?

HOW small can a turkey be to be good? we heard some one ask the other day. That is a very practical question just at this time, for a fellow wants turkey on Thanksgiving if at all possible. The flavor of turkey has become so fixed in the idea of Thanksgiving, so expressive of one's gratitude for the abundant harvests and escapes from epidemics, that it seems impossible that there could be a Thanksgiving without the aroma of this glorious fowl filling every corner and crevice of the home.

That aroma! How it raises the spirit of gratitude, as one sits in his home room and catches a sniff of the sweet odors that float in from the kitchen where the cook is thrusting a long fork into the joints and bosom of the fowl, and basting, with rich

gravy, its bronze body. Thanksgiving! Why, there it is in full blossom, filling a whole home with its radiance and its fragrance.

No wonder then that person wanted to know how little a turkey may be to preserve its virtue as a turkey. A great big roast chicken is good; so is roast pig; and veal stuffed by one who has the knack of it, breeds gratitude like a sweet favor. But the turkey! There is where Thanksgiving has taken up its abode; there is its headquarters; there is where the heart stands and blows the silver trumpets of joy and gratitude.

How little might it be? That is a solemn but practical question. Would a six-pounder do? Yes. An eight-pounder? Yes, yes. A ten-pounder? Yes, yes, yes. In which gradation of affirmatives is inclosed the doctrine -- brother, sister, do your best.

DIVORCE AND DOUGHNUTS.

THERE is a divorce case in Hoboken, where one of the complaints of the man is that his wife from whom he desires to escape cannot manufacture a first-class doughnut. Of course, this seems a very beggarly complaint, but then there is a consideration about it that must not be neglected, which is, that if a woman can make a fine doughnut, it is such an indication of ability, taste and refinement that she occupies the level of all good things.

There are grades of doughnuts just as there are grades in life, and they seem to correspond to each other. The soggy, tasteless, heavy, tough, greasy doughnut — what does that represent in human character? Is it not *prima facie* evidence of wifely incapacity? Could the beauty of home surround such a doughnut? Is it the flower of

refinement and educated taste? An answer to these questions plainly supports the conclusion of the husband.

But take the doughnut that is light, tender, mellow, flexile — you will never catch that crying out for divorce. There is too much sweet life behind it, too many smiles, and words that sing, and deeds that deck the path like flowers.

And then there are many things in this world that seem at first to be very small, and yet if they are properly articulated with their true relations in life, they expand into great affairs, as big, in fact, as sunrises and ocean views. Just try it once — step in from a big red dawn to a plate of greasy, soggy doughnuts and see how long the aurora bends over your thoughts. But if that doughnut had been a touch of grace and culture, the aurora would have stayed with your soul and made the repast happy.

So, you can partially account for this plea in the divorce case — that her doughnuts were bad.

* * *

POETRY OF PIE.

NOW comes the season for the pie — the real pie — not the berry confection pie; the season for that is past, gone with the spring flowers and the blush of the bushes — but regular pie — the apple, the pumpkin and the mince, pies of sterling character and exalted virtue; pies that represent the strength and fullness of the year; pies that bring joy and peace and a happy memory.

Consider the apple pie. Consider who makes it. That is important. It takes a sunny-tempered, bright-eyed, crimson-cheeked, white-armed woman to make a pie, that reaches the heart.

Pies are made of smiles, spices, gentle thoughts, snowy flour, graceful motions, rosy apples, all mixed together in a compound as delicate as a bunch of snowflakes. A man cannot make a pie. Neither can a cross and crabbed woman. They try and that is why there are so many bad pies in the world. A happy heart goes into a pie, like the sunlight goes into a flower. The slicing of the apples, the rolling of the paste, the shaking of the sugar and spice, all go in with a song or a merry laugh, and they will all taste in the pie. "I hate a pie," a man once said — how sad and gloomy must be that home!

And there is the pumpkin pie—what a monument of skill, taste and tenderness! That stratum of concreted sunshine and fragrant breezes, covering a white disc of crisp, mealy, melting crust, is the expression of a serene soul. Some people don't look at it

that way. They are not used to that kind of pie. Dough and pumpkin do not make pie. They are simply the materials to grace up with love and joy. They require a certain condition of soul, that has wrought into the mystic goodness of things, and then with a deft use of sugar and spice, mixed in with the sunset hues of the pumpkin, construct a viand that all Olympus would fight to get a piece of.

And then the mince pie — the pen falters and quails. No wonder some people don't like winter. No wonder they shiver through a season of ice and snow — they don't get mince pie — true mince pie made out of the cornucopia of the best that grows, and mixed with a fancy that is always building paradises along one's path. Of course, there are mince pies made out of tubstuff and other axle-grease — but the motherly sort, with all its exhilarating ingredients, enclosed in a

piquant crust, that is good enough without biting in — but biting in you get a foretaste of eternal bliss. That's the kind.

* * *

CHICKEN POT-PIE.

HERE is a menu for a Christmas dinner. It is presented in a very symmetrical shape, much like the top of a fancy newel post. It has the usual category of introductory viands, and all the subsidiary and outlying dishes, that go with the usual substantial features of a feast. There are oysters and scallops, salted nuts and celery, clear soup and plum pudding, olives and ice cream, all very nice to mince at, while one talks and listens.

But the man who arranged that bill of fare had not the remotest concep-

tion of the proper proportions of a feast. Why, right in the center of it, he put chicken potpie and roast turkey; as if a man were mean enough to discard either or leave one for the other. But perhaps the chicken potpie was ill-constructed or the turkey was tough; or may be there was not enough of either without the other.

Some of these suppositions must have prevailed, for no sane man would think of re-enforcing a chicken potpie with roast turkey. Chicken potpie itself, in its own right, made after the fashion of the old home, the dough light and aromatic, and the meat delicately tender, and the whole mass steaming up like incense to the Gods, is the completest instance of self-sufficiency, the fullest complement of the unhampered appetite, that ever decked a festal board.

The fellow who wrote that menu never saw chicken potpie except at a

restaurant or a hotel. He doubtless went on the theory that a nibble or two, and a little forking over the greasy crust, that tasted like the hoop of a pork barrel, was only preliminary to the turkey. Now, we have the highest respect for turkey, and do not propose that it shall be set up as an alternative to chicken potpie without a protest. It can stand alone. So can chicken potpie. Not the kind that is baked in a saucer or frizzled in a stewpan, but a great unctuous, redolent mass of juicy bird and snowy dough, that will fill to the brim every plate at a helping.

Once upon a time, the story goes, the gods of Olympus were sitting on a cloud eating manna and drinking ambrosia, when a delicate aroma touched their olfactory senses with a soft delight, and looking down, saw a good woman, in her hut on the banks of the Scamander, just dishing

up a chicken potpie. Hurriedly dropping to earth, they gathered about the viand, which was soon consumed. Ever after that, the good woman, in anticipation of celestial visitors, added a turkey to the feast, so that the children might not be without something to eat.

* * *

OYSTER COCKTAILS.

A YALE professor who is regarded as an epicure of some renown, in speaking of the oyster cocktail, said he thought the mixture an insult to anyone who had good taste. A well known Gothamite, who enjoys distinction in the line of knowing what is good to eat, was asked his opinion; and he thus replied: "An oyster cocktail is a vulgar dish. Oysters should be served alone. If one insists upon

sauce he can call for it, but a good oyster is only ruined that way."

These two men are exactly right. People who insist upon putting on oysters, sauces, catsups, and other stuffs, to make them taste good do not like oysters, and should devote themselves to sardines and limburger cheese. The oyster belongs to a class all by itself. It has merits of its own that should not be spoiled by perverted tastes. It is almost a sacrilege to destroy that delicate flavor, born in the mystery of the surge, where the pearls are born, by loading it with tomato sauce.

One might as well come right square up to the confessional and admit that he doesn't like oysters if he covers them with a decoction of catsups and condiments and drowns their nature with artificial flavors. The true art of eating is to get as close to nature as possible and let the sunlight, the dews,

the southwind, and the blue swirl of
the ocean season the food with their
gentlest benediction.

* * *

SALADE CAPRICE.

A SALAD is a sentimental affair. Of course, it constitutes a variety that is encouraging, but its place in the ranks of nutrition is away back. The women are addicted to salads, but the men generally are indifferent to them. The former leans toward conventionality, while the latter hanker for the real and substantial. On this account, women regard a salad as a necessity, while the men esteem it as a whim.

But as the women love a salad, he who brings forth a new one is ever their devoted friend. We hasten to appear as such, even if we are forced

to purloin one from a French chef, lately arrived in New York, whose dinners are filling the souls of the bon ton with visions of bliss. But imagine the environment — a symphony of china and snowy whiteness, trimmed with red flowers and red-shaded candles, and surrounded with radiant women, decollete et cetera — and then bring on the *salade caprice*. How the smiles flame up and brighten the red flowers and the red candle-light at the sight of it!

Here it is — hearts of lettuce, sliced tomatoes, sliced pineapple, served with a dressing in which Devonshire clotted cream (see cook book) is substituted for oil, and lemon juice for vinegar. Do you notice that all these ingredients occupy the sunlit plane of nature and embody her gentle spirit as the air embodies the songs of the birds? It is so. One can taste the sturdy sunlight in that heart of lettuce, the

sunset flush in the slice of tomato, and the mild breath of the southwind in that pineapple, all held together by a creamy spray and the sparkling zest of the lemon groves. No wonder the women love the salad. They alone can understand the depths of its beautiful mystery.

* * *

A CHINE OF SWINE.

WHEN the sky looks cold, the air is ready for snow, and the English sparrows snuggle up in the climbing vines, then one inclines to turn from lamb chops and peaches and cream, and seek the food that fires up the engines of the body and sends the blood dancing and shouting along the thoroughfares of life. Then it is that the soul wears the porcine hue, and clamors for oleaginous joys.

May we not suggest, at this trying moment, a helpful hint? Take about six vertebrae from the spine of a pig, that has been rooting among the fallen leaves, eating the mast of the hickory woods, or munching at the roots of the slumbering wild flowers; put them in a pot to boil, and at the proper time add four or five turnips, lovingly peeled and quartered; when tenderly done, remove in a white platter to the festal board and then surround the scene.

You will then have reached an achievement that excites all the juices of the appetite and sets the thoughts rippling around earth's crowning delights. What, this in a pig! Of course. In the little crevices along the spine are secreted all the dainty tidbits gathered from the kernels of the nuts, the tender heart of the cabbage and the golden nuggets of the rich young corn. This is the joy

spread out before you when you sit down to a chine of swine. People sometimes applaud the sparerib, and justly too, but it should be remembered that all those intercostal delights are only the seepage from the vertebral reservoirs of joy.

But the turnips — you don't like them? There is the secret of the chine. It is so fine itself that it sublimates the turnip, and infuses into that neutral root the sweet essence of itself. There is the truest virtue of the chine — it can make another happy.

PEACH COBBLERS.

THERE is the peach cobbler. It is now due. It is the superlative of pie. It is all pie, and more too. There is an end to the glory of peach pie, but not to peach cobbler. It is wide and deep, and its depth and width inclose the splendor of nature's wealth of sunshine and bloom-scented air there is in the whole beautiful world.

Peaches that smile like a sweet girl graduate and a paste as light and snowy as a bridal veil — make a cobbler of them, a deep, fathomless richness, imbued with a glint of the dawn and the grace of a fair hand, and dreamy with evening breezes and the carols of birds — spoon out great slices of it, and carry them reeking and dripping to your plate, and then, deluged with cream just off the clover,

set to, and fill yourself to the brim. Don't let your conscience fuss about eating too much or let your old dyspepsia cross your path for a moment.

There are some things in this world that are so good that their goodness is one's protection, and peach cobbler is one of them. But one must have a care. A peach cobbler is an inspiration, not an accident. It is a melody, not a tumult. It is a soft zephyr blowing through the peach tree and turning a woman's hand into a deed of grace. Is there too much poetry about that? Well, go and buy a pie for 15 cents at the grocer's — your soul was never built for peach cobbler.

There are so many things in this world that we only make half use of — that we contemplate with little sweeps of vision that go no further than a cat's. The peach is one of them. We will spend a whole season

on a stewed dish and sucking the seeds thereof, and never once think of the peach cobbler waiting and anxious to be evoked by a loving heart. Ah, how few divorces there would be if we had more peach cobblers!

* * *

THE PEAR.

WE are told that the pear came first — that it antedated the apple, the peach, the cherry and even the berries. The cave-dwellers used to eat it, and the charred fruit has been found in their subterranean homes. So the pear has had a long time to get good, and it has succeeded splendidly. It is the best fruit that grows. The best pear is ahead of the best apple, or the best peach.

There is nothing that holds the sweet tincture of life so luxuriantly as a

pear that has reached the summit of its glory. Bite into one just at that gushing, golden stage, when the morning sunshine and the fragrance of all the flowers are just itching to get out, and see how soon you are translated above the beggarly elements of the world.

Nature comes to meet a mortal at a particular moment. She doesn't wait around for him. A few hours too soon or too late, she will not be there. This is particularly so with the pear. Nature is sweetest when she is coy. Yesterday she says she will be here and tomorrow she is gone. One will have to remember that when he is eating pears — he must not miss her.

You take a fine Seckle pear or the nipple end of a Bartlett, just at the moment Nature scatters her full benediction upon them, and there is nothing beneath the moon that saturates the glands with such delight as they.

Of course, you know it without our telling you.

* * *

THE OLD FASHIONED PEA.

THERE is one thing certain and that is, the pea has backslidden. It was a grand vegetable thirty or forty years ago, possessing a flavor as delicate and sweet as the fragrance of a rose. The new fangled pea — the Telephone, Marrow Fat and other sorts that have come later — are poor substitutes for the old-fashioned pea, and it is a sad reflection upon the public taste that they are tolerated.

The peas we have nowadays seem to have taken on a new nature. They are bigger, fatter, clumsier, coarser, thicker-skinned, and rawer-tasting than the graceful, delicate, fine-grained and heavenly-scented pea of the youthful

days. The pea of the olden time was the best thing that came on the table. That old association of lamb and peas was intended to be a compliment to the lamb, and yet, spring lamb was supposed to be the ne plus ultra of all meats; it was the peas that made the lamb taste good. But think of the pea of nowadays, going with spring lamb — why they are better suited to corned beef and liver.

There are some things that it is almost a sacrilege to try to make better and one of these is the old-fashioned pea. It was perfect when it was born into the world, and its life was a blessing until the old vegetable iconoclasts got it into their heads to give it more body and skin. There it is, burdening the market benches, pushing aside excellence, and pulling down the public desire for things that have lost their virtue.

THE VERNAL MORAINE.

I N geology there is the moraine. This is a long drift of boulders and gravel, at the foot of a glacier, pushed steadily from Arctic climes down into regions of warmer air, where the glacier slowly recedes, leaving a long low ridge of sand, gravel and boulders across the land.

But the vegetable world has its moraine as well as the mineralogical world. You can see it in market any of these market mornings. As the polar chill has pushed the boulders Southward, the solar warmth is pushing the vegetables Northward. Instead of the ice urging the gravel down, we have the sunbeams pushing the strawberries, the asparagus, the tomatoes up.

The sun is now five degrees above the equator. He has proclaimed his

approach from the market benches. There are cucumbers, string beans, new potatoes, asparagus, radishes, young onions — all the product of this year's sun. This little moraine of sunshine is pushed right up under our noses before we are aware of it. While we are still expecting a final flurry of snow, we are greeted by the glow of strawberries, radishes and rhubarb, and are taunted by the flash of the white young onion in our bewildered faces.

The strawberry is concreted sunshine, the asparagus is the morning calm, the rhubarb is the dreamy even-tide, the young onion — you don't eat it? Well, many don't. Social reasons abound. But the young onion has caught in the meshes of the sunbeams, that have woven its fine texture, the daring spirit and jolly temper of the blue skies and all the bounding, rollicking atmosphere. You can

taste it as soon as it goes into your mouth. You know that the fragrantest breeze that blows, blows over the bed when the young onion secretes the rapture of the soil. It is the noblest boulder in the vernal moraine. Renounce society and try it before it is too late.

* * *

SANDWICHES.

DOWN in Porto Rico they have a kind of banana which they call "mata hambre," or kill hunger. If a man is starving it will save him. It has food value, and will make blood and nerve, but it has not a single quality to tickle the taste or arouse the sensibilities of delight; in which respect, it is very like a railroad sandwich.

Speaking of sandwiches — that is their purpose — to kill hunger. No-

body ever bought a sandwich for the joy of it. There is the well-known ham sandwich, the most successful appetite eliminator on the market, whose only pleasure is the satisfaction one has, while eating it to know that he is not starving. It is the same with all the meat sandwiches. A roast beef sandwich is no better. An egg sandwich is an insult to polite taste, and a chicken sandwich is a spoliation of both the bread and the chicken.

We care not to discuss the philosophy that supports this disrespect of the sandwich any further than to say, that this differentiation of the bread and meat idea of food, is a combination in which each surrenders its peculiar virtue for the sake of the combination. Try a nice breast of chicken in the center of a baker's roll, and see for yourself.

But the old ham sandwich is only the beginning of an evolution. The

lettuce sandwich dawned some time ago. It was a great improvement. Then, there is the onion sandwich, as tasty a food as was ever built, in which the heroic flavor of the onion comes like a waft of wind over a bed of lilies. Now we have the cress sandwich — as dainty a dish as was ever set before the king. Spread thin slices of bread with mayonnaise, and put them together with a layer of chopped cress sprinkled with a little lemon juice. There you are. It is moonlight to the lovers — not another fellow coming around. See the point. Well then, make your sandwiches out of the golden grain, garnished with the joy of the garden and the green banks of the wimpling brooks.

WHITE FISH.

THE Pennsylvania state fish commissioner knows something else besides official duty; he knows what are the best fish; and says the white fish is not excelled anywhere in the wide world. It is better, he declares, than shad, and this is a bold thing for a Pennsylvanian to say.

We have no doubt that the commissioner, when he praised the white fish so lustily, has just feasted off of a dish of broiled white fish. It was then, no doubt, that he said: "It is as fine a fish, bar none, as a man wants to eat." Would you like his experience, gentle reader? Get a two-pounder, good for two or three; split up the back, salt a little, anoint with butter slightly, sprinkle a little flour, spread skin side down on the broiler, put in the moderately hot oven 15

minutes, then butter somewhat, and on to the table.

Then you will appreciate what the fish commissioner said. It is the daintiest, mildest, sweetest piece of flesh one can put in his mouth. It is brain food, soul food and muscle food all combined. When one eats it, he dreams of shining waters, rippling toward the soft sunset far away.

But it will have to be cooked just so, or one might as well sit down to baked, fried or boiled white fish, from which the divine afflatus has been eliminated. The broiling must not be approached by profane hands or evil thoughts; it must be sympathetically, delicately, serenely done, and with a joy and a faith that go with all things good. Don't trust it to a bungler. Let the person broil it who loves the sunflowers, the big white clouds and the brook a-singing down the valley.

BOILED BEEF AND CABBAGE.

THERE comes a time, now and then, in a man's life, and a woman's, too, when they grow tired of soup and fish and divers roasts and the daintiest viands that fashion and society have trumped up for languid appetites, and then they want something real and substantial to eat, and fall back on boiled beef and cabbage. And when they do it, it is an occasion of great exultation; they had forgotten how good it was, and resolve to have it often.

Possibly in this experience there is a hint of atavism, wherein the recurrence of taste was of that which was so close to nature in the days of Eden, when the appetite was simple and unprejudiced and enjoyed whatever Mother Earth's loving hand offered. And thus it was, that the taste

wooded and crooned over a dish of boiled beef and cabbage — a combination so close to nature that her blessing still remained with it.

An observation or two: Get a tender chunk of brisket with a good rift of fat in it, and a crisp, compact head of cabbage; cut in quarters or eighths and put on with the meat when two-thirds done, with a scrap of red pepper, etc. — but this is not a cook book; the gentle reader knows how. It is all done as easily as gathering a bunch of roses.

But there is this caution — don't associate it with wash day; cut it off from all blue Monday association. It has its divine birthright and should not be cheated out of it. Have it when life is bright, the heart beats high and the thoughts mingle with the loveliness of all things, a part of which it will be. Have it on some noble anniversary and invite the gov-

ernor, the president of the board of trade, Doctor Philosophy and Professor Aesthetics. How their faces will glitter and how their hearts will send up a peal of joy!

* * *

EN CASSEROLE.

HAIL to the simple life! Hail to the composite of good things! Hail to En Casserole! Wherefore so much hailing? To give taste, and art, and darling leisure a chance. Follow this path. Get at your corner grocery two pounds of round steak or other cheap, lean meat, say an inch thick slice; likewise one turnip, one carrot, three or four small onions and a spray of celery.

Now then; sear the meat in a skillet, touching it with a little butter or dripping, thus hardening the surface and

shutting in the sweet juices of the meat. Slice up the turnip, the carrot and the onions, and chop up the celery, only a bit of it, mind. Have your casserole hot; lay these slices tenderly in it, put the seared meat on the top of it all, pour over it a pint of stock or water, pepper and salt a little, put on a tight cover and set it in the oven to bake for two hours.

Then leave it. Take up a book, or your sewing, or play the piano, or visit a neighbor, or take your heart out airing for an hour or so, only be back in time to put on a white apron and a bright smile for John when he comes. Dont' fuss. Don't fret. Don't be alarmed if John has brought two friends to dinner. It is ready and enough for all. Spread the white cloth, cut a few slices of bread, bring on the casserole and fall to.

There is a feast of delicious meat

and three vegetables, enough for four full appetites. You don't like onions, or carrots, or turnips? Remember, in the vegetable world there is a sort of filial relation, wherein, under certain circumstances, the onion bestows its best on the turnip and the turnip reciprocates, and so does the carrot, and the virtue of each, all has, and over it all the verdure of the meat throws a joy.

Herein is the delight of combination. There is something mysterious about it, as mysterious as when you blend the colors of the rainbow and make white light of them. Ah, and not so mysterious either, for in the mingling of the vegetables a graceful hand and a bright smile conduct the beautiful transfusion.

THE BATTER IN THE CROCK.

SO tender was the association of maple molasses with the buckwheat cake that, when the former disappeared in the shadows of the past, the latter went with it. So lovely was their companionship that they could not bear to be separated, and so they went down into the halls of memory, hand in hand, and have never returned.

They who have enjoyed the glad companionship of these choice spirits have some difficulty in imagining that what are regarded as their successors are purely legitimate. Sometimes one gets from the old water mill up the creek a bag of buckwheat flour, in which yet lingers the clear note of "Bob White;" and from out the bush of old Geauga comes a jug of syrup, that glows with the sunlight of a

broken winter; then, one tasted buckwheat and molasses, such as mortals enjoyed, as long as heaven could spare them, long ago.

One can get a dim idea of that ancient flavor from the descendants of this delightful twain, that now grace the breakfast table. In the mere resemblance one experiences a joy. There is a furtive flavor that flits along the senses like the song of a bird in a faraway meadow, or the laugh of a girl where the sugar water boils, but they come so indistinct that they only raise a fancy of what might have been.

And yet that fancy is a precious legacy. On which account we welcome the descendants, the new buckwheat cake and the modern maple, a combination that leads all the retinue of the griddle. A correspondent of the New York Times mourns woefully, because he does not get the "old-fashioned flavor" with his buckwheat

cakes, and another correspondent chides him for complaining, and hints that if he would only "leave a little batter in the crock to raise the cakes for the next morning," he would find the old-fashioned flavor had come back.

We would not weaken that luxuriant faith a jot, but would advise to leave a little batter in the crock for the next morning, and the next morning, and the next morning, till the bluebirds come again.

BREAD AND DIVORCE.

DR. WILEY thinks divorce and dyspepsia go together and since bad bread promotes the latter, it is, also, a cause of the former; and that if women made good bread there would be much less divorce in the land. Undoubtedly good bread promotes joy and peace in a household. It is all right for the doctor to sound the praises of good bread, but his declarations are sweeping.

The good bread is only an indication. It tells of an intelligent, appreciative and thoughtful woman back of it, and it is these qualities that deal such blows to the divorce business. But when the only talent is bread-making, and all others go astray, it is not likely that good bread is the controlling circumstance. It helps but it is not the whole thing. It will not

be effective if the woman is not pleasing in other ways.

And there are some men that don't know good bread from a brickbat and who never heard of dyspepsia, and these are the ones who generally go after divorces. But the whole problem is psychologic, not stomachic. There are men who get the best bread in the world and yet are kicking; while there are others, who live on the rankest staff of life, and yet are as serene as a moonbeam on a May night.

AN APPLE MENU.

THE suggestion to observe October 16 as Apple Day was heeded in the East, but not extensively. But it is a beautiful idea and may spread. Surely, the apple is entitled to much honor, and humanity will do itself a great good by paying a tribute to the noble fruit.

And then think how we might celebrate this pleasant digester, this noble brain food, this rosy-cheeked ornament of the center table. It would make a feast, of course, in the midst of games, of songs, of goodly company, and what a feast it would be!

Here is a little suggestion of a menu: Baked sweet apples, soft and brown, touched with sugar and smothered in cream; apple dumplings—the luscious fruit blinking in the soft embrace of light and snowy dough, the

whole inundated with a sauce brewed back in a sweet and spicy fancy; the apple pie, one of the noblest of Anglo-Saxon institutions — that shall be there, with its happy alternation of white pastry and ambrosial fruit — a finer triumph of fair hands than can be found in all the annals of embroidery and lace work; and the apple butter, how like a song melting in the air, does this good old grandmother compound chime in with the exciting clamors of the appetite!

But a word about that apple butter. It is made out-of-doors, under the blue skies, where the breezes play, and the women laugh and tell stories, and have a grand time — all this you taste in that dear flavor, that you cannot account for in the apples, and think it must come straight from heaven — yes, put apple butter on the menu. And good old apple sauce, too; it is not distinguished, but it is vir-

tuous, and he who lives on good bread and apple sauce may look the sun out of countenance and criticise the preacher for heresy. Apple sauce puts on no airs. It is just what it is. It is the benign truth of nature.

But the menu would continue to the bottom of this column, if we would make mere mention of all the possibilities of the apple. Let the celebration come on, with its pies, its dumplings, its creamy baked apple, its rich apple butter and its sweet cider. How great would be a festal day with nothing but beauty and good things in it!

THE CANTALOUPE FANCY.

AND now the cantaloupe appears in the market stalls. So soon? Ah, there is the blinking dilemma dazzling you — to buy or not to buy, that is the question. So teasing does one's fancy become, that when it meets the first melon or cantaloupe, it throws down the money and takes the risk.

The man away down in the Gulf States, who sees his melons and cantaloupes grow green and yellow in that soft and generous climate knows the susceptibility of the man this side of Mason and Dixon's line, and he hurries up a carload as a special temptation.

And it works. "Cantaloupes? Ah!" and he rubs his hands, smacks his lips and emits a merry twinkle from his eyes. He will take this fine, golden luscious one, the favored of the blue

skies and the scented gales of the South, and he goes home with it, as proud as a Roman conqueror, dragging the wealth of Ind at his chariot wheels.

He surprises Mary, who likes to be surprised if only happily. They will put it in the ice chest and have it cool for breakfast in the morning, and that time comes, and with it the cantaloupe, which William grasps with a frenzy, and swipes the butcher knife across its creamy periphery when it falls apart as green as a black walnut before a white frost comes, and then, smacking lips forthwith subside into a dish of every-day oatmeal.

THE BREAKFAST DILEMMA.

WHICH will you have, was the question as they sat down to breakfast — dewberries, sliced peaches or cantaloupe? Was ever mortal confronted with such perplexity, since Paris gave the golden apple to Venus on Mount Ida? Now it wouldn't do to say all three, or even any two, for when a person took one he would never think about the others.

If he takes dewberries, the ripe, sweet, juicy dewberry, the very essence of the dawn and the dew, he will not think there ever was such a thing as a peach or a cantaloupe; or if he takes the sliced peach, as fragrant a morsel as ever grew from a flower, the dewberry would never figure in the joys of the world; or if the melted sunshine of the cantaloupe glowed on his plate, his soul would hanker for no other heights.

This is the condition that confronts us today. There are the berries, the peaches, the cantaloupes blinking at you and beckoning you from every niche and crevice of life. You have got to make a choice. Oh, happy fate — one cannot make a mistake. Paris did and brought on a war. But here is a trinity of loves — each one promising peace and joy.

But why such ecstasy over common things? The ecstasy is because they are so common—common as every day. If they were not common; if they were for princes and millionaires and automobilists alone, then this article would lose its ecstasy and weep.

MINCE PIE.

THE Boston Herald says, "Once in a dozen years there may be a good mince pie, and then it is a gastronomical accident." But that is in Boston where they have gone daft on baked beans and such provender. That man hasn't any idea what a mince pie is; or any other kind of pie. A party of Americans on a steamship, coming over the ocean last summer, suggested apple pie to the steward and it came — a cross between a jelly cake and an egg kiss.

How can Boston know any more about mince pie? Its tastes are too elemental. It never learned the gentle art of putting two good things together and preserving the virtue of both. It wants its apples straight, its pumpkin straight and its beans straight. The union of apple and

meat, and the calling in of a loving spirit to bless the union, they never thought possible this side of the millennium. We know better out this way; at least, the women, who are initiated into the mysteries of all good things, know better.

Now, a mince pie is not a pinch of this, a drop of that, a chunk of something else, and a cupful of another thing. That doesn't make a mince pie any more than a jingle of rhymes makes poetry. There is something besides the stuff you put in — it is the way you put it in, the grace and harmony with which it blends, the divine afflatus that hovers over it. Slice up such a pie, made by one of our goddesses, take a copious bite, and then look out and regale your vision with the bright fancies that troop up to fill your soul with the joy of living. That luck comes to every man whose

fortune is a loving heart and a hand that knows how.

* * *

THE MAPLE WOODS.

DID you know that that heavenly flavor has quite disappeared from maple syrup? It was once there, as sure as the blush on the rose, but it has gone and the world will know it no more forever.

The people are increasing but the maple trees are decreasing, and some time, in the near future, the last sugar tree will disappear from the earth. Then the noble buckwheat cake, the soul-inspiring muffin, and the ecstatic fritter will relapse to the levels of bakers' rolls and saleratus biscuit. There is a sort of sympathy for the future denizen of the land, that he didn't know what maple molasses was.

He may sit at a table of delicious tablets and pick sunbeams out of cucumbers with a fork of pearl, but that condensed bloom of Eden, the flavor of the maple, is not for such unfortunates.

Of course, the supply of molasses keeps up. There are hogsheads of it afloat in the stores and in the highways. Twenty years ago, a man took out a patent for the manufacture of maple syrup from an extract of oak bark and a mixture of any kind of saccharine matter. He put it in jugs with corncob stoppers, and thus it went into the marts of trade, and the family sideboards, and especially on hotel tables; and there it exists in all its glory to this day.

This is the calamity of the disappearance of the beautiful maple woods, with their romance, their glory of outdoors and their delicate flavor of the wild flowers and the songs of

birds. Talk about a lost art — it is nothing by the side of a lost taste; and the sugar making, with its snowy wax and red-cheeked girls — all gone, all, for a decoction of oak bark and sugar cane.

* * *

CLIMAX OF THE CHERRY.

ONE time, across the seas, a gentleman said: "How I'd like to be home today and get a big slice of good old cherry pie!" and he smacked his lips, and turned his gaze away into the dreamy distance, where angels sometimes flutter about. That man had a soul as well as an appetite. When one talks of cherry pie, if he has a particle of poetic instinct in his heart, and can rise above the grovel of matter of fact, he does not think of it as a nutritious aliment; he

doesn't rank it as food at all, unless some bungler has gone and spoiled it in the making.

But if gracefully concocted by the deft hands of a smiling woman, whose bosom catches the spirit of June days, the fragrance of their flowers, the soft hues of their sunsets and the smooth touch of their breezes, that cherry pie stands up on a level with the summer solstice. Behold the cherry tree, full of the glow of the dawn, and red with the wine of the succulent earth, how beautifully it stands for the good will of the generous year! It is the smilingest tree that thrusts the fingers into the blue skies.

Then turn to the cherry pie — taste it; don't chew it up like a chunk of bologna, but as a souvenir of heavenly grace. Don't you taste the ruddy dawn, the little afternoon zephyr, the song of the robin and the breath of the rose bush? Is there not some far-

away sweet sense that steals upon you, like the concretion of an old sweet-heart melody? Well, that's it. That's the cherry pie. Don't you taste it? Isn't there something trembling on the palate trying to give utterance to the joy of life and the loveliness of all terrestrial things? There isn't? Well, order hash.

* * *

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE.

IF, as Mrs. Rorer says, the strawberry was created for the snakes, let us hope before the snakefolk meet the gracious purpose, they will leave enough of the berries for strawberry shortcake, for that is something that the good Providence has not put near the ground to be convenient to the snake people.

The strawberry short cake is the fairest benediction of the sun. For

there is about it not only the first fruit of springtime, but the endeavor of loving genius to furnish it an accompaniment that will add to its innocence and beauty. The good of this world is not in the naked simplicity of the things of the soil and the sunbeams, but in the combinations of the gentle soul and soft, white hands.

There are shortcakes of various kinds in this world. All are good. There is beneficence in the shortcake that encloses fruit or berry of any kind, but if one desires to reach the climax of culinary benefactions, let him consider the two light, white layers of shortcake and the oozing stratum of golden sunshine in between. This is no accident. It is the triumph of that poetic sense which can bring into close communion the shining wheat fields and the crimson refulgence of the morning air. That is what strawberry shortcake is.

Here is a food that has sentiment and, when one is eating it, he can almost taste the dewdrops as they catch the sunbeams and melt them into the berry, or he can hear the music drifting across the white prairie making ready for the creamy shortcake. It is all the fairest aspects of nature, gathered up by white hands, gentle hearts, and happy anticipations, and blended into a compound which holds inviolate the grace of nature and the loving purpose.

Here is your ample slice. Deluge it with creamy cream — deluge it until the strawberry struggles to smile through it. The highest destiny of the cow is to minister to the strawberry shortcake, not that it is necessary to its glory, but because it is not. Of course, we will bury a little of the sunshine with the cream, enough probably to drown the sighing of the south wind, or hide the ocean of living

green, but he will get with it a little of that soft dalliance that makes life so restful and serene.

A person who approaches strawberry shortcake without dreams, without feeling he is the especial object of all the ministering angels that make their homes on the zephyrs, the sunbeams and the smiling dewdrops, is simply a feeder, whose natural resort is bacon and cabbage. He is not the child of the universe or a part of its glory.

EGGPLANT.

THE eggplant belongs to a large and interesting family. The Irish potato is a cousin. So is the black nightshade, but we don't think that reflects credit upon the family. The bittersweet is also a cousin, and a pretty one, too. It has some brothers living in Africa and South America, but one does not care to make their acquaintance.

But eggplant is all right. It is the best looking one of the family, if we except the bittersweet, but it has virtues that this radiant vine has not. Get one and see. The big blue bulbs are tumbling over one another in the market these days — they are so plenty. Buy a ripe one, not a very big one, and see that the blue sky is smeared thick all over it.

You don't like it? Oh, well, you are

one of those ten thousand American housewives that Marian Harland tells of who don't know how to cook it. She says it is a much abused vegetable — an abomination when only half-fried and soaked in grease. That is the usual way. Beware of such desecration. Oh, you have to handle this vegetable daintily. It's no turnip. It is the idol of the dew and sunshine. Peel, cut in half-inch slices, then salt water bath for one hour; wipe each slice dry and dip in beaten egg, after which it is named, and in cracker dust; set in a cool place for an hour and fry in deep boiling fat; drain in heated colander before serving.

Each step has a purpose, all calculated to keep within the brown coating of the cooked plant, that succulence and sweetness which are the grace of its being. Then you have a mild, tender dish, and you eat it thinking of the morning breeze which is a

part of it. But oh, the stuff they call eggplant — frizzled and fried to a greasy rag — food fit only for the garbage cans; hurry it out.

* * *

THE WATERMELON.

A GENTLE friend writes us not to forget the watermelon among the good things of earth. Of course not. There is a venerable fable to this effect: When Mother Nature had finished making her peaches, her cherries, her strawberries, her apricots, her mangoes, and all the luscious fruits that grew in the Garden of Eden, she had some of the fruit stuffs left over, and all these remnants she emptied into a big urn, and mixed them together, putting in a little more morning sunshine, more of the fragrance of flowers and the songs of

birds, and then making a shell out of the green grass, the petals of the tiger lily, and the leaves of the wild almond, she enclosed the delicious compound within it, and called it a watermelon.

It is said when Dr. Tanner broke his fast of forty days, it was on a Georgia watermelon, weighing fifty pounds. At the very moment when the hunger term ended, the watermelon was split in halves, from out of which protruded the ruddy, redolent comb, at which the doctor made an impatient clutch, and grabbed a great fist full of crystalline sweetness, dripping with the exudence of the dawn, and the heart of the honey suckle, and crunching the whole magnificent chunk into his wide open mouth, he stifled starvation with a slice of heaven.

But why intrust the glory of the watermelon to the faint phrases of

fact? If there is anyone, who sweeps all the keys of taste, from cornpone to pate de foie gras, and is equally at home with terrapin and rabbit-hash, it is our dear friend of the African aspect, and just listen to him:

“Hambone am sweet, a good, kinder
meat,

’Possum am bery, bery fine;
But gimme, oh, gimme, oh, how I
wish you could

Dat watermillion smiling on de
vine.”

That places the watermelon on the summit of palatine delights, and there it rests, like a vision of summer fields, aglow with the life of all good. One nibbles at a peach; he spoons a berry; he pecks at a cherry; but he is overcome by a watermelon, so it gushes from its ineffable bounty, or as Joel Chandler Harris more poetically ex-

presses it: "It dribbles at de mouf."
He who objects to dribble is a heathen.

* * *

COOKING.

A WRITER proposes the establishment of schools for household servants, especially for those who do the family cooking. This is a very sensible suggestion. The most important and the most neglected of all arts is the art of cooking, the beautiful art that is the preservative of health, of peace in the family, and of little to do in the divorce courts.

In the same paper, in New York, another writer asks "where in the city can I get a good buckwheat cake, or a piece of decent pumpkin pie?" He might as well have added, or a good doughnut, or a cup of coffee, or a fried potato, or a baked bean or

the much vaunted fried chicken. Of course, there are spots where these things are fairly well done, but as a rule, they are shabbily done.

Painting, sculpture, landscape gardening, and even millinery, require thought and taste, but when we come down to the art closest to life and health and joy — why, any old kind of brains will do. All we seem to demand is that the cook shall be able and willing to frizzle and fry a dab of dough in a skillet of fat.

There are three kinds of cooking — negative, neutral and positive. The first is no cooking at all; it is only spoiling good material; it is simply jabbing wildly at a delicate duty. The neutral sort is the kind where a person eats and doesn't know it — just swallows and goes; no sentiment, no beauty, no delight in it. The third is where the light of the mind and the grace of the heart join in the delicate mingling

of the material, and touch this and that feature of the process, with the lovely vision of the sculptor who rounds the white muscle of Venus's shoulder, or of the artist who blends in a flower the tints of another world.

"Pshaw," some revolting soul will say — "talking of cooking in that way is nonsense." There is the trouble — our standards are too low. We began with mud pies and haven't got much above it yet. A beautiful art is held down to an ignorant drudgery. Sometimes a girl, with a natural taste for cooking, will bless mankind, like Blind Tom with the piano, and just like some sweet, breezy girl with her heart full of sympathy, will beat a professor teaching school. When such a girl comes along, she is hailed as an angel. We pay her \$4.50 a week — God bless her,

CORN BREAD.

S AID the man of joyous appetite:
“Corn bread is a sturdy and conscientious diet. It makes muscle and nerve, and good thinking; and it is descended from the loftiest progenitor. There is nothing so beautiful and poetic as a cornfield blazing in the glory of summer; and when I look back and see those emerald acres drinking in the sunlight, and waving in the west wind, I say, ‘Pass the corn bread, please.’”

Whereupon a buxom matron said:
“That depends very largely upon the kind of corn bread. There are some good, some bad, and some no better than angel food. But there is a kind that tickles you with the tassels of the stately stalk, that fans you with the flutter of the big green blades, that reflects the golden glow of noonday

over your heart, that gives you a taste of the pure morning dews, and makes you hear the sweet whistle of the meadow lark across in the meadows."

"That's the sort of a corn bread you want, my dear sir," she went on to say. "People talk about eating to live, and living to eat, but they are all wrong — the true doctrine is, eat to be happy. Fancy and sentiment are the main things — not the liver and the gastric juice. The corn bread of poesy and blue skies is a trinity drawn from the clover fields, the farm yard where the pullets play, and the broad acres of glittering corn — a celestial emulsion, as it were of milk, eggs and corn meal. Could there be a more suggestive combination of joy, health and plenty?"

"How to combine, eh?" Your wife surely knows. Listen: One pint milk, half pint white meal, four eggs. Pour the boiled milk over the sifted meal.

When cold, mix scant tablespoon of melted butter, a little salt, teaspoon of sugar, the yolks of the eggs, and lastly the whites of the eggs beaten separately. Bake half an hour in hot oven. Then you have your corn meal in company that it likes, that draws out its sweetest fancies, and sends a thrill of joy to the end of the toes. Roam once more in the gleaming corn fields, tangle yourself up in the morning glory vines, and scare the song sparrows from the yellow tassels. There is your corn bread, for you.

THE CANTALOUPE.

AND now the cantaloupe has come, the joy of midsummer and the glory of the breakfast table. How it chimes in with the morning — with the soft south wind and the sunlight basking in the trees! No one thinks of it through the day, or at night, or when one is tired; but in the morning, when the heart is on the heights of life, it seems quite like some loving provision of Nature, by which to fill out one's pleasant dreams.

You can take all the viands from garden, or field, or orchard, and there is nothing so intimately touches the breakfast spot, as that semi-sphere of honied sunlight, with its lips parted in smiles and inviting you to bliss. As you plunge your spoon down into its auriferous sides, where Nature has concreted all the sweetness of dew, of

starlight, of the fragrance of clover and the sweet breath of the afternoon, you feel all at once, that the world is a success and it was made for you.

And when you get through with your cantaloupe, and the taste smacks itself into smiles, and you look at your neighbor across the table taking beefsteak, eggs and potatoes, then comes over your soul a weariness of life, and there is no solace, except the contemplation, that tomorrow will be another morning, and another cantaloupe.

This royal fruit is the product of civilization. That is, when men arrived at the point, where they could enjoy something better than oranges, or peaches, or berries for breakfast, the cantaloupe was brought forth, absorbing the sweetness of all these delights, and enriched with a mixture of ambrosia brought down from Olympus.

Do you think this description overdrawn? Remember, we are talking about the rich, ripe, golden cantaloupe, icily flavored, and wide open, on the breakfast table.

* * *

ICED TEA.

NOW is the time to talk about tea, for there is nothing so refreshing, when the sun's rays cut deep, as a glass of ice-cold tea, for it cools down the furnaces of the system like a freezing blast in at the open doors. Just when a mortal feels he is perspiring his last, is the time the iced tea rushes in to save him. There is no liquid that matches it in rescuing a torrid-tortured person from utter collapse.

But it must be right. Tea is thought to be so easily made, that the kind of

tea is regarded as unimportant. Any old tea is tea. It makes no difference if it is 25 cents a pound or \$1.50 — it's tea. Now as a fact, there is nothing that one buys that has as wide range of merit as tea. One can follow it all the way along from timothy hay to the sweet shrubs of Eden.

Brewing a tea is as much a part of the divine afflatus as writing a poem or painting a sunset. It is not a job for rude hands. It is dealing with a fragrance and handling a spirit. In the first place, the herb must be of fine lineage — no rude stock of careless parentage. There is the Oolong family from Formosa — try that. There is a tea full of tone, of health, of cheer. Don't bother with the Japans, the Hysons and the mixed kinds that tear up the nerves and fill the stomach with dyspepsia. Some may prefer Darjeeling or Ceylon, but don't look for glory in a cheap tea.

Then use clear, fresh water. Watch the tea kettle. Keep it pure. Boil the water till it rages. Pour it on the tea leaves, a teaspoonful of leaves to a cup of tea, and let it steep for four to six minutes, never more; sometimes less, if the drinker is delicate or nervous. Then you get a cup of tea that brightens the eye, gladdens the heart, and makes the nerves leap for joy. Of course, the hot cup is the thing; but it takes the right sort of hot tea to make the perfect iced tea. Don't be afraid of it. The pure, fragrant, poetic tea is also the hygienic tea. Drink it down like a hero, and listen to the thoughts tinkle in the welkin and the brave endeavor take up the battle of life.

EATING IN THE WOODS.

GO out and eat in the woods. That is the gospel of the day. Take your fried chicken, your sandwiches, your apple pie and all the glorious category of good things and hie to the woods with them, and spread them out in rich disorder on paper table cloths, and let your appetite rollick at will.

And don't forget the coffee pot. There is no happier hour of anticipation, than when one builds a fire out in the sylvan shades, puts on the pot, and watches it rise from a simmer to a foamy boil; and in the meantime, nipping a few blackberries from the bush near by, listening to the bumble bee bumbling about, and watching the young rabbit scampering across the lane — all the while your impatient companions peeping into the pot to see

if the coffee has come to a boil, and threatening to pounce upon the fried chicken, if it doesn't hurry up.

And then to squat down in the clatter of merry feasters, and with a half of fried chicken in one hand and a chunk of marble cake in the other — who cares for conventionalities in a woodland feast or how things go together? — and then talking one way and looking another way and eating every way, put in the best half hour you have had in a year. That's what eating in the woods means.

And then how everything around makes everything taste good. Above you, the solemn trees spread out their arms like a benediction, and afar rolls the happy land where the horizon embraces it with a smile — ah, how good that chicken is, and that pie, and that onion sandwich! They, too, seem to take on the spirit of the beautiful environment and enjoy it with you.

There is that pantheism in a woodland feast, that all things good and beautiful crowd around and partake of its richness; and you lose yourself in the joy of it, and the next thing you are drinking from your neighbor's tincup of coffee and eating pickles with your pie. Really, it is an experience that makes life sweeter for many and many a day. Oh, gentle reader, just try it.

NOON BREAKFASTS.

IT is said New York City proposes to eliminate the luncheon and move the breakfast down to the 12 M. period, and thus have two meals a day. Good enough idea, except there is no sense in the lie-abed breakfast at noon. What a person wants is to put the morning into his life, the hour of beauty, and hope, and high thinking.

Let him get up and eat his toast, his bacon, his eggs, his lamb chops, his fried potatoes and drink his coffee, and then go out and, facing the sun as he peeps over the horizon, exclaim, "Good morning, sir." Then one takes hold of the zest of life and catches step with the music of the spheres. That hour makes the day, it makes the life, and puts lots of eternity into active capital.

The Spaniards have their almuerzo at noon, and behold. They have dribbled out their energies, lolling and languishing in bed, until the sun has grown stale and fills with ennui their lazy arteries. That is one thing the matter with Spain — eating breakfast at noon. The habit came of her being so rich and staying up late at nights, and it is from these conditions that New York society wants to lie abed.

But let us respectable people not do that way; let us take a lesson from the sun, the lark, the morning glories, the shining dews, the birds of the fields, and all the things that join in the song of life — kick high the winding sheets, plunge into the rollicking bath, eat an egg and toast, and then, stepping out on the veranda, salute Father Time with the happy assurance that you are up with the procession. And, as you go down the street, and look up at the closely-shut-

tered houses, and think of the lifeless bodies up there, waiting for a noon breakfast, you sigh and mourn and wish you could spread the gloomy cypress over their beds, in token of a mild melancholy.

* * *

SUMMER EATING.

THESE are days when meat should be eaten in dainty bits — not great chunks or slabs or roasts, or fries or boils — but little suggestions of the great meat world, without floundering about in it.

Possibly, a suggestion of such dainty bits might not be amiss. Get some boiled ham from your grocer — a nickel's worth to a person — broil it moderately and eat. There is a summer meat meal. Or if you don't object to a box of sardines — get a good

one — garnish with a little lemon, and this with a few slices of ripe tomato and a baked potato rivals the dinner the Kaiser will eat tonight.

In these days, when a zephyr is a joy and a butterfly is a landscape, one doesn't need to sit down to a loaded table — with meats, and puddings, and soups, and salads — why, it is enough to make the blue skies look mad. In the winter time when the winds are howling, and the icicles are hanging from the eaves, a man wants magnitude in his eating, but when the June solstice has passed, he sighs for the grace of it.

Even an egg or a lamb chop seems too warm these days, and one naturally looks around for the cottage cheese, and even suspects there is enough meat in a doughnut to answer all practical purposes. The old-fashioned pie seems too heavy for these days of crystal sunshine, but if the filling were

appropriate to the short cake form, it would not seem so.

Then, there is that Porto Rican combination of rice and beans — the latter red, boiled with a mere slip of pork. These are served separately on the table; but there mixed in the plate of the eater. No Porto Rican meal of any consequence is served without this combination. There is more strength in ten pounds of this mixture than there is in ten pounds of sirloin roast; and it is a torrid food that makes a fellow plump and glorious. Not so dainty as some things we mentioned, but full of vigor and good conscience.

We are speaking only of summer meats, and the borderland thereof, not of the fruits, the melons, the berries, the corn, the squashes — these are a beautiful world all to themselves.

DR. WILEY'S ATTACK ON
PIE.

DR. WILEY has attacked the pie trust by requiring that its labels shall enumerate the ingredients of the pie. This will, of course, complete the fate of the commercial pie. No one will mourn over this. The commercial pie, the machine-made pie, the pies that sell at so much per gross, are mere conglomerations of stuff, down to which the noble name of pie has been dragged for mercenary reasons.

If we were to label a real pie, and one might as well think of labeling real poetry, it would be something more than listing sugar, apples, spice, flour, butter, etc. These things are used in making a pie. There are some amusing cartoons in the Chicago Record-Herald upon Dr. Wiley's crusade against the pie, the last of which seems

to be an effort at evading the consequence of the doctor's assault on the pie. It is a picture of an ecstatic young man, with a marriage license in one hand and a daisy damsel in the other, and together they are making their heels fly in an effort to get at the justice of the peace's office.

There is the secret of the pie — the woman, the bright-faced, white-armed, cheery-toned woman. That is something that old Wiley cannot get into his label. It cannot be commercialized or machine-made, any more than the sunbeam that tints the petal can be machine-made or commercialized. Old Dr. Wiley has the thanks of all lovers of pie for getting the pie out of the market and away from the grocer shelves. It has no more business there than a love letter or a good-night at the gate.

Of course, people who do not see

any romance or poetry in eating, and who only eat to appease an appetite, and never to experience that gentle beneficence which inheres in all things that are good, may not discern the woman in the pie, but if she is there sure enough, and has sprinkled her joys, graces and gentle qualities in the viand it is a dull soul that does not become enraptured over it.

* * *

OUT WITH THE FRYING PAN.

A CORRESPONDENT in an exchange uses these words, "The frying pan is the curse of the country." We like that sentence. It sounds healthy and strong and breaks forth like the mutterings of a real reform. And no one can dilly-dally with its meaning, for it is plain — the frying pan is a curse.

It is not our intention to resent the allegation. But there are some exceptions so forcible as to make one sometimes forget the doctrine. Now, there is fried chicken. We think that is an exception, for we could not for a moment regard it as a curse. There is somewhat in the name, that blends with the recollections of happy days, back at the old home or over at the farm. We cannot blame the frying pan severely when fried chicken is mentioned.

And then, when fried oysters are referred to, one begins to feel his prejudice grow weak and flabby. There is the taste in the fried oyster that cannot be found anywhere from the zenith to the nadir. We propose to make that an exception when we denounce the frying pan. It is currently reported that another fruit of this curse is the doughnut. There are

some doughnuts, no doubt, that are faithful to their reputed source, but there are those, too, that are born of as fair hands as ever bred a piece of embroidery — they glorify the frying pan.

“De gustibus non disputandum” — it is necessary to hallow this argument with a little Latin — whereof the point is that the best morsel of fish out of all the waters of the earth is fried black bass — we propose that the frying pan be excepted from the curse on this account. And again, there are people in this world who do like ham and eggs, and how could we get this noble luxury if the curse was wholly removed from the kitchen?

Time and space forbid a further analysis of this appalling curse, but we may say, we do not antagonize the theory of the curse, except to suggest that, in naming a few exceptions, it may be possible to reduce a formidable

foe to a mere suspicion, and in suggesting these exceptions one may do loyal service to the main proposition.

* * *

SAUERKRAUT.

I N its menu for last Saturday, the Boston Herald prescribes the following for

DINNER.

Boston Baked Beans. Brown Bread.

Sauerkraut.

Banana and Orange Compote.

Coffee.

We are very glad that sauerkraut has been elevated to the dignity of a piece de resistance, for it has been lying very low in the dietary as a food for people of weak stomachs, a reputation it has, no doubt, achieved by the remark of the old German, who

said that he had laid in two or three barrels in case of sickness.

It is said that the delicate ferment to which it attains in its curing is so grateful to the gastric juice, that its entrance to the stomach is greeted with delight. It is on this account, that it is said to have been known to cure headaches and other forms of indigestion. But Boston culture has taken to it as a sturdy food, good for high thinking, and athletics, and nerve, since in its menu, sauerkraut is the center of the feast, with a few beans thrown in for art's sake.

So in these cold days, let us imitate Boston in putting sauerkraut upon the table anon, and if we don't like too much Boston "culchah," we might substitute for the baked beans a few strands of Frankfurter. Then let the winds howl and the skies frown.

THE STAFF OF LIFE.

A NEW YORK paper announces that butter has declined one cent a pound, and that the gilt-edged quality, that smells like a rosebush, retails at 50 cents. And then one can buy it all the way down to 17 cents. There are as many different kinds of butter as there are people, and vice versa, for the individuality of every person is found in the butter he makes.

As a rule, the excellence of butter consists in its purity. Butter made by a dirty person is always bad. He communicates his fault to it and one can taste that fault in it. The difference between the 50-cent and the 17-cent butter is largely a difference between the people who made the two brands. The 50-cent man is a pure-minded and clean-handed sort of a fellow, and a person can taste this

purity in the butter; he can taste it in the freshness of the grass and the fragrance of the clover, for purity makes room for these things.

But poor butter isn't that way. The dirt takes their places. It drowns out the taste of the sweet dewdrop and the red clover. Dirt is like fraud in law, it vitiates everything. In fact, they are the same thing, and a fellow is cheated by either. When one buys poor butter, he gets dirt, carelessness and ignorance and he can taste these things. But when he buys the best butter, he can taste purity, the breath of flowers, the happy, honest heart of the maker, and he is conscious that he has got his money's worth in buying the best.

Good bread and butter! There is the spirit of frankness, honesty, nobility and health in the very sound. But what a lack of goodness there is in the world in this respect! How much

poor butter; how much poor bread!
If we were asked to breathe the secret
of life in some sweet girl's ear, it
would be this: Leave off your French,
your music, your embroidery, your
bridge, until you are able to crown
your home with good bread and butter.

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